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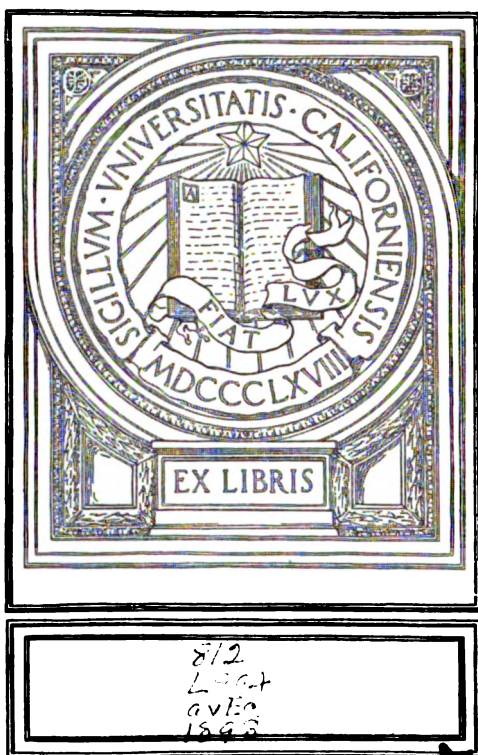
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THE AMOURS  
OF THE  
CHEVALIER DE FAUBLAS

BY  
JOHN BAPTISTE LOUVET DE COUVRAY

FOUNDED ON HISTORICAL FACTS. INTERSPERSED  
WITH MOST REMARKABLE NARRATIVES

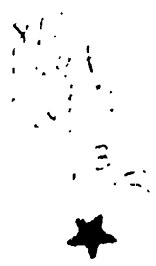
A LITERAL UNEXPURGATED TRANSLATION  
FROM THE PARIS EDITION OF 1821

VOLUME IV

WITH NUMEROUS BEAUTIFUL ENGRAVINGS  
ETCHED BY LOUIS MONZIES  
FROM DRAWINGS BY PAUL AVRIL

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TO VIRU  
AIRBORNE



CONCLUSION OF THE AMOURS  
OF THE  
CHEVALIER DE FAUBLAS.

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THE Marchioness at first cast around her a stupefied look. What object has struck her eyes? Is it a dream that torments her?—Her mouth utters a few incoherent words; and tired with a first effort, her eyes close again. Soon after, for the second time, her hands drop down, and she re-opens her weighed-down eyelids. Madame de B— is enabled to consider anew the female phantom whose presence creates her surprise. She has recovered, at last, the entire use of her senses; a more composed survey convinces her that it is no dream, but that she has fallen into the hands of her most mortal enemy.

It was less difficult, however, to surprise and attack Madame de B— than to intimidate and overpower her; it was she who commenced the

contest; it was Madame de Fonrose whom the first blow was aimed at.

The MARCHIONESS.—Although I was in greater want of rest than of visits, I am delighted to see you, Madame la Baronne.

The BARONESS.—Delighted! is saying a great deal, I apprehend M. le Vicomte exaggerates.

The MARCHIONESS.—You are so modest, madam!

The BARONESS.—You are so polite, sir!

The COUNTESS (to the Baronne).—You are not so yourself; wherefore did you awake him? I had begged of you—madam—let me tell you that I should be very much displeased if you were to pick a quarrel with him in my house.

The BARONESS (with a laugh).—Do scold me, I advise you.

The Marchioness, astonished at what the Countess had been saying, looked as if she was asking me for an explanation. I was going to give it her in a whisper; the Baronne prevented me.

The BARONESS (running between the Marchioness and Faublas).—No, by no means, if you please. I doubt not but you have many things to say to one another; but you must

speak aloud!—Well! do I disturb you? Speak, M. le Vicomte, you who have been better trained.

The MARCHIONESS.—Madame is going to persuade me I am: no one knows more about it than she does, her suffrage is worth a thousand; her long experience——

The BARONESS (in a faltering voice).—Long! Would not one think I am a hundred years old!

The MARCHIONESS (apparently concerned).—Ah! I beg pardon, I have hurt you, madam.

The BARONESS.—Hurt me! not in the least.

The MARCHIONESS (ironically).—I have though. Madame has retreated, Madame has ceased the attack, to think of the defence. Ah! how sorry I am!

The BARONESS.—You need not grieve much, for there is no harm done. (To Faublas.) You do not speak, my fair young lady.

FAUBLAS.—I am listening to what is said, I suffer much, and I am waiting.

The COUNTESS.—And I likewise wait very impatiently for the end of this contest.

The COUNT.—For my part, so far, I don't understand much about this quarrel: what I can see very plain is, that your souls are all affected.

The BARONESS (to the Countess and Faublas).—This contest tires you. Keep up your spirits, it will not last long. (Pointing to the Vicomte.) I am certain this gentleman will have the goodness to put an end to it presently, by bidding us farewell.

The COUNT.—I have caught it at last. You are of my own opinion; it is a love affair of these young persons!

The COUNTESS.—You presume, Madame, in my house, to use an individual so bad, to whom I lie under the greatest obligations!

The BARONESS (laughing).—The greatest obligations!

The COUNTESS (giddily).—To be sure, the greatest. Had it not been for him, all Montargis——

The COUNT (inquisitively).—Well! all Montargis!

FAUBLAS (with great hurry).—It is all Fontainebleau, Madame means.

The COUNTESS.—Yes, yes—All Fontainebleau—all Fontainebleau.

The MARCHIONESS (to the Countess).—How so? We might have procured assistance for Mademoiselle there. It was much better un-

doubtedly to leave that place; but when I advised you so to do, I only rendered you a very little service.

The COUNTESS (low to the Baroness).—How witty he is!

The BARONESS.—Be it so; but notwithstanding all you may say, Countess, I wish to become entitled to your everlasting gratitude; I wish to rid you of that gentleman.

The COUNTESS.—What an obstinacy!

The BARONESS.—Don't be angry. Hear me, I appeal to the Vicomte himself; he will own——

The COUNTESS.—Your behaviour, Madame, is very strange, quite unpardonable; and although this gentleman had been guilty towards you of fifty infidelities—

The BARONESS (laughing).—Infidelities? He!

The COUNTESS.—Certainly.

The BARONESS.—Infidelities towards me? he!

The COUNTESS.—Yes, infidelities towards you. Do you think I am ignorant of his having been your lover?

The BARONESS.—He! my lover?

The COUNT.—Hush! Hush! don't let us



speak of those things. I don't like such topics of conversation.

The COUNTESS.—Indeed, sir, I admire you! What has this to do with what you dislike!

The BARONESS.—He! my lover! What a pleasant story! (She bursts out laughing.) Countess, pray inform me who told you?—Little Brumont, probably. (To Faublas.) Cunning little miss!—How! truly, don't you know better? How could you presume to make me a present of the kind? Would you be so daring as to repeat the burlesque accusation before my face?

FAUBLAS.—Why not? if you force me.

The BARONESS.—Well answered!—And you, M. le Vicomte, will you dare also to maintain it? Indeed, that would be the only thing wanted to render this adventure truly ludicrous.

The MARCHIONESS.—Madame, there are conquests which a young man publishes through vanity: there are *des bonnes fortunes* which prudence will not allow him to acknowledge having fallen to his lot: it rests with you to decide whether I can be indiscreet.

The BARONESS.—Why, truly I consider that you would be strangely puzzled if you were

obliged to reveal all your conquests: without compliment, I believe they have already been numerous; at Versailles for instance, you are in a fair way.—

The COUNT.—Exactly so! there it was that I saw him.

The BARONESS.—Is it not owing to women introducing you, that you are patronised by the Minister?

The COUNT (low to the Baroness).—Oh! Oh! but if he is patronised by the Minister, you must not speak to him as you do; you should keep upon good terms with him.

The MARCHIONESS.—There are some folks who don't believe it, and who notwithstanding will set the example.—The lady, meanwhile, has eluded answering my question: she has not presumed to determine whether I should be indiscreet.

The BARONESS (in an ill humour). I have decided you should.

The MARCHIONESS.—You act from modesty! I refuse your decision; I demand that we call the votes.

The BARONESS.—I agree to it. Let us see. Monsieur le Comte, speak first.

The **MARCHIONESS**.—No, no, you do not understand me. When the accused party is a person of your consequence, it is not before a small committee that the enquiry is to take place; in a case of that sort, the court, town and country, are to be applied to.

The **BARONESS**.—That is too impertinent.

The **COUNTESS**.—You deserve as much. Why did you awake him? why do you offer to turn him out of my house?

The **BARONESS** (to the Countess).—To speak the truth I ought not to be angry, for it is only to be laughed at; what might amuse me much is to see you side with them against me.—However, there must be an end to all this.—I am expected—(she looks at her watch) I have no time to lose.—Monsieur le Vicomte would not walk back home: he is of a delicate constitution, I beg of him to hand me down to my carriage—where he will not object to take a place. I engage to carry him back to Fontainebleau: is that polite enough?

The **MARCHIONESS**.—I am very thankful for the obliging offers of Madame la Baronne; but since Madame la Comtesse will permit, I shall stay here.

The COUNTESS.—You are right.

The BARONESS (to the Countess).—He is right, undoubtedly, and you do very well to applaud him. (To the Marchioness). Are you in earnest?

The MARCHIONESS.—Quite so. I shall stay here so long as Mademoiselle is in danger, and I shall not be troublesome to the Countess.

The BARONESS.—Do you expect I will leave you here?

The MARCHIONESS.—I can't see by what means you can force me to go away.

The BARONESS (angrily).—How audacious! Only think, I need but speak one single word.

The MARCHIONESS (with great composure).—You will not speak it out?

The BARONESS.—Who will prevent me?

The MARCHIONESS.—A moment's reflection. I am well aware that you are acquainted with my secret; but look round, and tell me what advantage could those to whom you reveal it, derive in consequence?

The COUNTESS (low to Faublas).—What does that mean?

FAUBLAS.—That concerns your husband. I will explain it to you by and by.

The MARCHIONESS (to the Baroness, in a friendly tone).—The Countess is light-headed; in a fit of rage she might forget herself; I beg you will not provoke her.

The BARONESS (low).—I shall find means to send M. de Lignolle away.

The MARCHIONESS (aloud).—I do not believe it.

The BARONESS.—Who will prevent me?

The MARCHIONESS.—That lady, mademoiselle, and myself.

The BARONESS.—Monsieur le Vicomte, let us both go out together.

The MARCHIONESS.—No.

The BARONESS.—I will speak out.

The MARCHIONESS.—I defy you.

The BARONESS.—I had heard prodigious encomiums on your incomparable merit; but Fame, who publishes feats of gallantry deserving of being kept in memory, and who commonly exaggerates——

The MARCHIONESS (ironically).—Do not flatter me. That Fame has not spoken to you about me. You know well she has no longer time of speaking of anyone else, since you have made it your business to find her occupation.



The BARONESS (ironically).—She, nevertheless, has some leisure hours left to chatter about you. She says that after having selected from the throng the fortunate object of your affection——

The MARCHIONESS.—Selected from the throng! So much the better for my mistress and for myself. It is an example which I set to some females of my acquaintance. They, when they take a lover, do not select him from the throng, but make him an additional member.

The BARONESS.—You will never be ranked among them: you who distinguish yourself by so many divers talents; you, who, according to circumstances, know so well how to change your tone, temper, behaviour, name, and so——

The MARCHIONESS.—Hush! take care, Madame la Baronne, your *sang froid* has left you, you are going to say something; (looking at the Countess and at Faublas) you will expose us; take care. It is seldom dangerous to hold one's tongue; but frequently it is perilous to speak.

The BARONESS.—A word in your ear, if you please, Monsieur le Comte!

The MARCHIONESS (to the Countess).—Believe me, madam, allow no secrets.

The COUNTESS (to her husband).—I will not have you speak to her.

The BARONESS.—But—

The COUNTESS (to the Baroness).—Neither shall you speak to him.

The BARONESS (to the Count).—Since it is so—I beg your pardon—but I must beg of you to leave us for a moment.

The MARCHIONESS (to the Countess).—Do not let him go.

The COUNTESS (to her husband).—I will not have you leave the place.

The COUNT (muttering).—Never mind, you need not mention it; nothing escapes me. I can see, notwithstanding her assuming a good countenance, that the Baroness's soul is affected; with regard to that young man, since he has so much credit with the minister, I conceive he must not have occasion to complain of being ill-treated in my house. But I know the world: a man, a master of the house especially, always commands respect; (aloud) so, then, I must stay to prevent quarrelling?

The MARCHIONESS.—Yes, do stay.

The COUNTESS.—Stay.

FAUBLAS.—Stay.

The BARONESS.—Since everyone will have it so, stay then. This turns out in a pleasant manner; it would occasion me too much ill-humour, if I were not amused. (She laughs very heartily.) Countess, give me your hand; they are playing you some trick; let us shake hands, for I am made game of also.

ALL TOGETHER.—Explain.

The COUNT (rubbing his hands.—I entertained a confused idea, and was saying so to the Countess: They are making game of her. (To the Baroness.)—But I should not be sorry to know in what manner: explain it.

The BARONESS.—Why, truly, they know I cannot explain: I am sensible I must wait. Well! patience. (She takes a chair.)

The MARCHIONESS.—You were expected, madam.

The BARONESS.—The observation is not very polite, sir! however, on account of your being rather awkwardly situated, I forgive you. I confess I was anxious to take you away with me, but since your going is so positively opposed, I demand being permitted to stop with you.

The COUNTESS.—Just as you please.

The MARCHIONESS (to the Count).—I beg you will not keep standing, sir. (She reaches him a chair.)

The BARONESS.—Madame de Lignolle does not mind that excess of attention.

The COUNT.—Quite the reverse, I am very thankful. (He reaches a chair to the Marchioness.)

They all sit round my bed, and their respective countenances deserve being noticed.

The Countess divides her affectionate attention between the Marchioness and me; and if sometimes she seems to recollect that Madame de Fonrose is present, it is to show her discontent, either by a sulky look, or a disobliging monosyllable.

M. de Lignolle absolutely neglects the Baroness; the whole attention of the courtier is directed towards M. de Florville, upon that young man who was in such high credit with the minister; he approaches, caresses, and strangely importunes him.

The Vicomte receives with modesty the thanks of Madame, and almost with dignity the advances of Monsieur. By the entire security

which he affects, one would have thought that he had forgotten his danger and his adversary; but the less he seems to pay attention to them, the more I presume he keeps them in mind. Every now and then Florville casts at the Baroness a proud, imperious, and triumphant look; would it not be incomprehensible, however, if the Marchioness, exaggerating to herself her advantages, and losing sight of her position, should consider an enemy as beaten who had not yet left the field of battle? As for me, timid warrior, wondering at the first success, I dread the second attack; though the courage of my ally inspires me with confidence, the indefatigable obstinacy of her antagonist intimidates me; and doubtful which of the two is to carry the day, I hope, I tremble, I admire, and observe in silence.

The Baroness, though single-handed, makes game of them all. She punishes the Count, who impolitely neglects her, by praising enthusiastically whatever he says; to be revenged of my perfidious tricks, she darts at me, by stealth, a reprobating and caressing glance: a look which seems to convey at once congratulations and reproaches. To the unjust anger of the Countess,



she opposes only long bursts of laughter; and with a bitter and threatening smile, she beats back the majestic glance of her haughty rival.

I see her at last involved in deep thought; next she rises from her seat, goes into the gallery, calls one of her servants, gives him orders and as she returns to us, is heard to say aloud: Let my coachman get ready.

“Let my coachman get ready!” Did she really speak those words? O my guardian genius! O protecting angel of the Marchioness! I return you thanks, the victory will be ours.

In compliance with the Count's desire, and the Baroness allowing it, the old topic of conversation was resumed. M. de Lignolle invited Florville not to neglect charades, commenced a pompous eulogium on the affections of the soul, and of the soul of a courtier. A quarter of an hour had elapsed: on a sudden, we heard a fowling piece fired, and in the yard of the chateau, cries of to arms! poachers! poachers!

At this hue and cry, M. de Lignolle thinks no more of charades, the Vicomte, or the court, but rises, leaves us, and rushes on in a great hurry. The Countess, either to quiet or to de-

tain him, offers to run after him; but Madame de Fonrose stops her, saying:

Don't be alarmed, it is only a trick of my conception, to call away your husband, and in spite of you, to turn your rival out of doors.

The COUNTESS.—My rival?—

The BARONESS.—Alas! yes, my poor dear child! You suffer yourself to be made a dupe of! Only look at the supposed young man. By the shape, and the features, can you mistake a female? Can you witness her artifice, her perfidiousness, her incomprehensible audacity, and not know?

The COUNTESS.—The Marchioness de B—! Great God!

The MARCHIONESS (to Faublas).—I leave you with regret my friend; but I shall hear of you. (To Madame de Fonrose, in a menacing tone). Rely upon my gratitude, Madame la Baronne? and yet keep my secret, beware of exposing me by divulging this adventure. (To Madame de Lignolle). Adieu, Madame la Comtesse; if you are reasonable enough to harbour no resentment against Vicomte de Florville, he engages not to reveal your unguarded conduct to the Marchioness de B—.

She went out; the Baroness followed her.

In order to form a just idea of the raging transports of the Countess, it would not suffice to be as irascible and violent as she was; one must, besides, burn with a like fire to that which devours her. At first, the excess of her amazement suspended the excess of her fury; but the frightening calm did not last long, and the explosion was terrible. I saw Madame de Lignolle shiver and turn pale; then on a sudden, her whole frame appeared agitated by a convulsive motion; her throat swelled, her lips trembled, her eyes were inflamed, her face turned of a purple violet colour: she attempted to cry out, but could utter only stifled groans, her feet beat the ground, her weak fist got bruised against the furniture, she tore her hair off; she even dared to lift a sacrilegious hand against her charming face, whence blood immediately issued from several scratches. What an accident for herself and for me; but I could not have foreseen that cruel effect of her despair.— Worn out as I was, I collected powers enough to be able to get out of bed, I tried to drag myself close to her: the unhappy creature did not even see me! she rushed towards the door, and in a



*I fell prostrate on my knees and on my hand.*

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# DAY OF CALIFORNIA

TO VIKU  
AIBGILAO

stified voice, said: let her be brought back to me, that I may be revenged!—That I may tear her to pieces?—that I may murder her!—Eleanor! my dear Eleanor!—she heard me, turned round, and saw me in the middle of the apartment; beside herself, she hurried towards me: do you wish to follow her? well go! go perfidious man, and never let me see you again!—what can detain you? she is waiting for you! she is waiting for the reward of her enormities. Go to enjoy with her my disgrace, your ingratitude, and her infamy. Go, run: but remember that if I can meet you together, I will immolate you both.

She had seized my arm, which she kept shaking with all her might; I fell prostrate on my knees and on my hands. She cried out: but it was not a scream of rage. Anger had already made room for fear.—Eleanor, how can you imagine that in my present situation, I should think of following her? I wished to join you, my beloved, I wanted to justify myself, to sue for forgiveness, to offer you consolation.—Eleanor, hear me, be calm, I beg of you!—for my sake, for your own sake, spare your many charms; spare that skin so soft, so white, and



those little sweet hands, those long floating hairs, that so charming face! Oh! you, whom the god of love purposely made so handsome, beware of altering one of his most pleasing works, respect a thousand attractions formed to be caressed, and procure the most exquisite pleasures.

Whenever you have the misfortune of making your mistress angry, you must endeavour to soothe her immediately; and whoever, in such an occurrence, feels incapable of acting, should at least say something, and for want of having it in his power to do better, he ought, as a substitute for tender caresses, to urge passionate encomiums, and season the flattering discourse with all the warmth the consoling action would have been susceptible of. Such is the ordinary advice which love suggests, and that love inspired me to abide by: yet I cannot positively affirm that the Countess was appeased by that alone. It appeared to me very plausible, that fear, after removing anger, had made room for compassion, and that my tender-hearted friend, moved at the sight of my situation, more than by my fair words, forgot my wrongs, to think only of my danger. Be it as it may, if I understood the cause, the effect was not to be mis-

construed. Madame de Lignolle raised me up, supported me, helped me to get into bed again, and then sitting close to me, she leaned towards me, and hid her face on my bosom, which she watered with her tears.

The Countess changed her attitude when she heard Madame de Fonrose approaching. Gracious God! exclaimed the latter, what a figure! and after applying a handkerchief to the face of her friend, she added: Madam, I have told you many a time already, that when a young handsome woman was angry she might weep, groan, scold her maids, quarrel with her lover, and plague her husband; but that she must spare her own self, and, above all things, her sweet face. I, nevertheless, thought that in the first access of your passion, you would have acted rashly! But I could not have stopped with you.—What is become of Madame de B—? asked Madame de Lignolle.—She nobly refused my carriage—which she had no occasion for. The sly Vicomte had made himself quite at home in your house: he kept a servant of his, dressed in gay clothes, in your hall, and a pair of horses in your stables.—What a woman! exclaimed the Countess, with extreme vivacity; how auda-

cious in her behaviour! how impudent in her discourse! When I met her at Compiègne, she told me she was a relation of the Marquis de B—, and you too, sir, you made me believe so! you have imposed on me most shamefully! What had brought her to Compiègne? Answer me—you keep silent—you are a traitor! Get you gone, leave my house, begone directly! I was such a simpleton as to give them credit! She followed us on the road, joined us at Montargis—in what a situation did she find me there? My stars!—as long as I live I shall be ashamed of myself, and weep through rage!—What I think more provoking still, is to be forced to acknowledge that if I had arrived a few moments later—yes, only some minutes later—it would have fallen to my lot to have surprised my unworthy rival in the arms of a perfidious—for he loves all those he meets with: whether the Marchioness or the Countess, what signifies to him? provided she be a female.—How many mistresses do you want?—Do you wish me to have several lovers?—Don't attempt to justify yourself! You are destitute of delicacy, of honesty, of good faith! Get you gone immediately, and never let me see you again!

Madame de Lignolle's former rage returned by degrees; I trembled, lest her husband should come back. The Baroness, to whom I imparted my apprehensions, quieted me. The supposed poacher, said she to me, is my running footman, in a disguise. He is possessed of a pair of light heels, and is favourably inclined. He is aware of the Count going in person after him, and will procure that gentleman the pleasure of a long race. He will find exercise in plenty for the amateur, and I warrant you that we shall have as much time as we can wish for.

Meanwhile, the Countess, who did not listen to us, was going on: She surprised me; she seemed as if she pitied, and wished to serve me. I addressed a thousand insignificant compliments to her, was lavish of ridiculous thanks, and this gentleman allowed me to proceed. He even did more than that; he coalesced with her to make game of me—But you, Baroness, wherefore did not you let me know who she was, as soon as you had found her out?—You are making your jokes upon this occasion. Do not I know enough of you to be well satisfied that no consideration whatever could have silenced you: that you would have burst out; and that, too,

even in the presence of your husband.—Undoubtedly, in the face of the whole universe; I would have exposed the insolent creature; I would have put her to the blush; I would—— Let me tell you, madam, instead of wasting time by quarrelling with her, you should have summoned up your servants, and have had her thrown out at the window.—Ah, to be sure, I had at command that very simple and genteel mode of getting rid of her, without making a bustle, or scandalising the public! But, indeed, one does not always think of what might be done! I did not give it a thought.

This impostor, cried the Countess, looking at me, has made fools of us both, my dear Baroness: it was he who told me, as a secret, that that woman was your lover.—if he had confessed to me that, formerly, you had been a man, I would have believed him—and yet that is the manner in which he has abused the blind confidence I reposed in him! He shall never betray me again, however! Let him begone, I detest him! and will see him no more!—How will you have him go?—When I reflect that that odious Marchioness has stopped here all night—with me—near him—and, besides, part

of the day! (She screams aloud.) Heaven forgive me! I left them tête-à-tête for a whole hour! for an age! Tell me, sir, what were you about together? Speak! While I was asleep what took place?—Nothing my dear; we conversed.—Oh, yes! conversed! Do not imagine you can impose upon me again; speak the truth, tell me what you have done together; I insist upon it——

Countess, interrupted the Baroness, laughing, you suspect him of having committed a crime, of which—without offering him any offence—of which, for four-and-twenty hours, he has been absolutely incapable.—Incapable! he? never! When I returned, sir, she said you had a palpitation, and her hand—she must be very bold to dare to lay it on your heart—her hand!—and you must be very kind to suffer it! That heart is mine; it belongs to no one else—alas! what do I say? the ungrateful man! the flighty young man! he gives himself up to everyone indiscriminately! I am certain that, during my sleep—yes, I am positive; but I expect the avowal from your own mouth; I insist upon it; I had rather be made certain of my miseries, than to continue in a state of dreadful un-

certainly. Faublas, tell me what you did together. Hear me; if you confess, I will forgive you. Own it, sir, own it, or I shall discharge you; yes, I am determined—I will discharge—I will dismiss you.

Wherefore dismiss her? said M. de Lignolle as he was coming in. You must not; I am even very sorry I went out, for you have sent away the Vicomte.—The Vicomte! once forever, sir, I declare to you, that I will never have him mentioned in my presence.—Ah! but what ails you, madam? Your face—My face is my own, sir, I may do whatever I like with it; meddle with your own business.—Be it so; but I repent having left this apartment; you have been availing yourself of my absence——

The BARONESS.—It has not been long; the poacher has suffered himself to be caught much sooner than I expected.

The COUNT (throwing himself in an arm-chair).—Caught, indeed! the best runner could not achieve it in four-and-twenty-hours' time. Ah! what a devilish man! since he is no bird, he must be the devil himself. Imagine a stag that has just started! Why, madam, he ran as fast! He then would come back again. I could

see him within pistol-shot; and, presto! at a hundred yards distance. When you would have thought him very far, he seemed as if he had dropped from the sky, you had him under your nose; he really put my men at defiance.

The BARONESS.—But you, sir?

The COUNT.—This alters the case; I was always at the head of his pursuers. This rascal easily found out whom he had to deal with; when I got close to him, he took to his legs with double efforts; it would have given you pleasure to see how afraid he was of me! Ten times I was on the point of catching him! But, notwithstanding he has made his escape. I remembered the Vicomte, and gave it up. Now that I am off, I dare to say all my servants will be unable to come up with him.

The COUNTESS (to Faublas).—Why will you not confess?

FAUBLAS.—I swear there was nothing done.

The COUNTESS.—Own it, or I will dismiss you.

The COUNT (to Faublas).—Never mind; give Madame that satisfaction; it will cost you nothing; confess.

The BARONESS (to the Count, with a laugh).



—Do you know what you wish him to confess?

The COUNT.—Why! that the Vicomte is a very agreeable young man!—most likely!

The BARONESS.—Most likely! what do you mean?

The COUNT.—How! is not that plain language? I mean, that most likely mademoiselle finds the Vicomte is a very handsome fellow. (To the Countess.) But though she did confess, that is not a sufficient cause for you to dismiss her.

The COUNTESS (to her husband).—For God's sake let me alone, or I shall be angry. (To Faublas.) Confess.

The COUNT (to Faublas).—Oh! I beg of you, do confess. You do. We all here do. You may tell the Vicomte that I find him so; and do not forget to let him know that his going away has occasioned me severe regret; that he will always do us great pleasure whenever it will please him to come and see us, either in Paris, or——

The COUNTESS.—If ever he dares to show his face in a house of mine, I will have him turned out.

The COUNT.—I wonder at you; just now you espoused his cause most violently!—I wish you could know your own mind.

The COUNTESS.—You, sir, who now speak, were of a contrary opinion an hour ago.

The COUNT.—For an hour back a great change has taken place.

The BARONESS.—Quite so.

The COUNT (to the Baroness).—Don't I speak the truth, madam? You have some knowledge of the world, you, madam, and I don't doubt but that you guess at my motives for viewing things under a different aspect. (Much lower.) I thought at first that this M. de Florville, although of a tolerable good family, enjoyed, like most young men of his time of life, a very indifferent existence; I therefore could not see of what advantage Mademoiselle de Brumont's partiality to that youth could be productive. It is a maxim of mine that a man of rank more than any other, must be on his guard against new acquaintance, so as never to form but such as may be profitable. Now listen to this, madam: that man who, upon no occasion, cannot be useful to us, must sooner or later be doubly burthensome to us, because, as he has

nothing to give, he always ends by asking for something; in the course of ambition especially, whoever does not help, must necessarily check and consequently retard our march; that is the reason why I did not wish to form a connection with the Vicomte. But you tell me that he is in high favour at Versailles, and that has caused my disposition to be altered. I don't wish to meddle with your contentions, with the quarrels among women; neither is it my province to examine whether the means adopted by that young man, for his promotion, are very delicate; the essential object for me is, that they be very powerful. (Pretty loud.) Methinks, that M. de Florville, in that respect has nothing to wish for; it appears to me that, favoured as he is by nature, and so situated as to turn those advantages to profit, he cannot but rise high and very quick too. His acquaintance I consider as extremely precious for Mademoiselle de Brumont, who must think of getting a fortune, and for me who long to augment mine.

The COUNTESS.—Go you, sir, and all your fine calculations.—Go to—I am beyond my-

self!—I repeat to you, sir, that I will never hear of that—

The BARONESS (interrupting her).—Impertinent creature! (To the Count.) That is the manner in which she treats him now.

The COUNT (to the Baroness).—Indeed! it is your fault, and I repent having gone out— (in a low voice). You know that at Versailles, one must be unceasingly soliciting—

The BARONESS.—The worst that may happen is to obtain nothing.

The COUNT.—By dint of importunity you always succeed—provided you have friends,—that is understood—and as a proof, I have lately carried off a pension of six thousand francs. But Madame de Lignolle has insisted upon my resigning it to M. de St. Prée. Oh! I confess that has hurt me. The Countess is a child who does not know the value of money: she imagines that a man who is worth one hundred and fifty thousand livres a year, has no further occasion for the king's bounty; you, madam, in whom she reposes great confidence, ought to make her a few representations on that subject.

The COUNTESS.—All that you say is useless.

I am no more to be made a dupe of by all your idle tales—but I insist upon your confessing all your wrongs. Do confess, or I will dismiss you.

The COUNT.—Endeavour to make her comprehend also, that far from discharging Mademoiselle de Brumont, she ought to treat her with redoubled politeness, attention and regard, and above all things to invite M. de Florville to come as frequently as possible.

The COUNTESS.—Sir, you have your apartment, I beg you will be so kind as to let me be quiet in mine.

The BARONESS (to the Count).—We are not at liberty here, we are interrupted at every minute; let us go somewhere else.

The COUNT. Be it so, with all my heart, because you understand reason—but wait a little.

The COUNTESS.—Will you confess?

The COUNT.—Before I go, I wish to give you good advice; you, mademoiselle, confess; for if it is not so it will soon be, we believe it, and so must you in the end. You, madam, whether she confess or not, do not discharge your *demoiselle de compagnie*, for I am read in the affections of your soul, and you would

be overwhelmed with grief an hour after. With regard to the Vicomte, I shall mention him to you no more; I shall make it my business to settle with him.

We were left by ourselves. Madame de Lignolle obstinately persevered in exacting an avowal of my supposed offence; whereas, under a persuasion that telling a falsity could answer no purpose, I persisted in speaking the truth. Chagrined, however, at my protestations being made in vain, I tried a last effort which was crowned with success.

My beloved, I repeat it, and take my solemn oath, I think but seldom of the Marchioness, since I think continually of you; since you have been mine, Madame de B— no longer belongs to me. This day, the same as yesterday, I was her friend only, and to-morrow it will be the same. Tell me, under the impression of what error could I think of her when I am by the side of you! Can it be possible for me to regret any of the advantages she is possessed of, when I see you endowed with a thousand qualifications she is in want of? Notwithstanding all her accomplishments, must she not envy all your natural endowments? Don't you look hand-

somer with your rising charms, your unaffected graces, your seducing sprightliness, than she is to be found beauteous on account of her dazzling youth, her lofty manners, her proud deportment? Has she, my Eleanor, a soul equally compassionate and liberal as yours? Do you believe that I can ever forget the joy of your vassals upon your return, the gratitude of your tenants, the praises your respectable rector saluted you with? I have witnessed them, and my heart enjoyed the sight; you are here the object of general worship; you are for all those good people a beneficent providence, which never requires being asked for anything, but which commands unceasing thanks. Could your lover be the only one to refuse doing justice to your virtues? the only one to repay your kindness with ingratitude? Don't you believe it, beware of believing it. Believe rather, my adorable friend, that I wish I were permitted to go with my Eleanor, far from every other seduction, and inhabit for the remainder of my life, the humble cottage which the Countess de Lignolle has had repaired for old Duval. Cease complaining and suspecting me; cease to dread too weak a rival; I esteem her, but I revere

you; I retain some friendship for her, and the most tender love for you; it is true that for a time I have spent happy moments in her company: but I have since enjoyed delicious ecstasy in yours; in short, Madame de B— might now offer me pleasure, whereas from you alone, my Eleanor, I can expect happiness.

Happiness!—Thus engaged in drawing a parallel between two rivals almost equally seducing, but whom nature had gifted in a very different manner, I was forgetful of another woman more favoured still, who united in her person all the virtues and attractions of both; I was forgetful of Sophia, and so wildly prepossessed that I expressed wishes inimical to our being re-united together. Ah! I dare not hope that the avowal of so enormous a fault may ever be a sufficient reparation in the estimation of others as it is in mine own.

The more I became culpable towards my wife, the more occasion my mistress had of being satisfied. Very well! said the Countess, throwing her arms round my neck, if you had held out such language at first, you would have persuaded me immediately! Since you love me, and that you don't love her, I am content; since you have



not committed an act of infidelity with her, I forgive all the rest.—But I don't forgive you; you have not spared my property, the most valuable part of my property! you have been tearing your face!—Will you love me less on that account? It would be very wrong of you, for if I am less handsome, I am become more interesting.—I will have none of that interest. Promise me that you will never commit similar excesses.—And you, Faublas, promise that you will never make me angry.—Ah! upon my honour!—Well, said she, laughing, see how good-natured I am; I engage never more to fly in a passion.

The Count, who was coming in at that moment, exclaimed: God be praised! she has confessed at last.—She has confessed! repeated the Baroness with surprise.—Not at all! answered the Countess, who clapped her little hands together, and jumped for joy.—How! resumed M. de Lignolle, she has not, and yet you are in such good spirits!—Exactly so, and the very reason is because she has not confessed.—This, said the deep observer, is beyond my conception. I however will deduce at least the truth of this principle: that the soul of a female is absolutely

enigmatical.—I shall draw no conclusion, said Madame de Fonrose, but shall retire with an easy mind and content.

When she called upon us on the following day, M. de Lignolle had left the castle. Letters come from Versailles in the morning had induced him to set off immediately; and although we entertained not so high an opinion as he did of the important business that summoned him to court, yet we attempted not to keep him at home, or have him postpone his departure.

The Baroness instead of congratulating her friend, damped her joy; my father had commissioned Madame de Fonrose to bring me back to Nemours, where he was waiting for me with my dear Adelaide, who had entirely recovered from her late indisposition and fatigue.

The first word the Countess spoke was to express that henceforth we were never to part; and when the Baroness had forced her to acknowledge that I was bound to obey my father, Madame de Lignolle, appealing to M. Despeisses, the surgeon, maintained that my extreme weakness would not allow my being taken away. She declared in addition, that so long as my existence was threatened, she was determined to

nurse me herself until I should be in a state of convalescence, and that no human force should oblige her to part from her lover before he should be entirely recovered. Madame de Fonrose after having urged prayers, representations and menaces, went away rather dissatisfied at obtaining no more.

On the next day, my father called for me himself. As soon as M. de Brumont was announced, the Countess dismissed all her attendants, and ran to meet my father. See, said she in a joyous and caressing tone, come nearer to him, he is no longer confined to his bed; there he is in an arm chair, look at him!—We have been pacing round the room several times—he has had a good sleep—he recovers his strength, he is getting better, much better. You are indebted for his preservation to my vigilance, and for his recovery to my care; I have guarded him against his despair, I have saved him from his illness; through me he lives, for me he is bound to live—solely for me—and for you, sir, I agree to it, but not for you alone.

The Baron addressed me: to what a step do you expose a father who loves you? Is this what you had promised me?—Was it in this

place that I was to meet my son? Madame de Lignolle interrupted him: Cruel man! would you have preferred finding him dead at Montargis? When I went to join him there, he was by himself, delirious, holding a pistol in his hand. Sir, I must repeat it to you, I saved him from his despair. Alas! it was not however the grief of having lost me that deprived him of his rational faculties, that rent his heart.

My father continued speaking to me: Since Madame de Fonrose has not been allowed to take you away yesterday, I am come myself to-day. —He won't listen to me! cried the Countess; he even scorns returning me a word of thanks! How ungrateful! not even a word of politeness! —Sir, though you may refuse proper acknowledgment of my services, think at least of the attention and regard that are due to my sex, and remember that this is not Mademoiselle de Brumont's house.—In order that I should think myself obliged to you, madam, it were requisite I should be acquainted with your dealings only, and ignorant of your motives; you have done everything for this young man, but nothing for me. As to Mademoiselle de Brumont I don't know her, I am come here to fetch the Chev-

alier de Faublas, the husband of Sophia.—Of Sophia! no, sir, mine! I am his wife! Oh! I am his wife! (she kissed me) and your daughter, added she and laying hold of one of his hands, which she kissed: pardon me for what I have been saying; forgive my inconsiderate behaviour the last time I was at your house; excuse my inexperience: remember only that I love you, and that I adore him. Let me tell you, I was extremely anxious to see you again, and to speak to you. I will inform you of every particular. For some days past a great change, a very happy change has taken place—the bonds which link him to me are now indissoluble: in less than nine months hence, you will have a grandson—hear me, listen to me—yes, it will be a boy, a pretty boy, lovely, generous, sensible, lively, witty, intrepid, replete with grace and beauty like his father. Hear me now, don't attempt to withdraw your hand. Are you sorry for my carrying in my bosom a pledge of his love? Or could you think—Oh! the child is his; his own, you may rest assured of that; it is not M. de Lignolle's,—never has M. de Lignolle.—I protest that no one had ever married me, before Faublas. Ask him, if you think I

speaking an untruth. No one before him had, neither shall anyone after him espouse me.

Unhappy child! said the Baron at last, whom extreme astonishment had kept silent for a long time: What transport misleads you? And how can you reveal to me similar confidences?—It is you, exactly, whom it is incumbent upon me to choose as my confidant; you, who only view me as the mistress of your son; you, who knowing only of Madame de Lignolle's frolics and foibles, form the most unfavourable idea of her character, and judge her most rigorously. It is true that I have suffered myself to be seduced—but in what manner, and by whom? Look at him first, and tell me whether I am not excusable? To speak the truth, his victory was carried in an instant, but that is exactly what renders my defeat justifiable. If I had calculated my defeat, it would not have been so prompt, and perhaps I would not have yielded at all, if I had known what it was to contend. But, in my profound ignorance, I understood nothing about those matters; I was only a married woman nominally. Do you doubt it? Ask Faublas, he will confirm it; he will tell you that it was him who taught me—

love! Can you conceive how a young person, thoroughly simple, totally innocent, unacquainted even with the privileges of Hymen, could have known and observed her duty? I took a lover as I had taken a husband, without reflecting, not from curiosity, but yet, I confess, determined by the desire of being revenged as soon as possible, for an affront which was represented to me as unpardonable. I took the Chevalier first, because he happened to be there at the critical moment; and next, because I know not what natural instinct apprised me of his being very amiable. You now may be sensible, sir, that although I may have strayed, yet I am not criminal. If, at my first step, I have happened to fall, the fault rests with those who, when they opened a new course for me to run over, left me there in the dark, instead of directing me and supplying me with a proper light. If ever I am unhappy and degraded, it will be the fault of Destiny which has sacrificed me, and of Chance, who has served me too late. Ah! wherefore did he not offer himself to me a few months sooner, since he was to be the creator of my existence? Why did he not come on the first day of last spring

to that Franche-Comté, where, for the first time, I felt *ennui* in my aunt's company, when I felt agitated by an inquietude entirely novel, consumed by an unknown fire, devoured by the want of loving, of loving Faublas, of loving him alone? Why did he not come, then? I would immediately have bestowed upon him my fortune with my hand; my person and my heart I would have given up to him, and would have been his lawful wife then!—and, for the remainder of my life, I would have been, of all wives, the most happy and the most respected! —but, alas! he did not come! Another presented himself—and what another!—great God! He was introduced to me; I was told: This gentleman wishes to marry, and suits you; a maid must not continue so; become a wife, I, without even enquiring what it signified, promised to become one, and so I did one evening, at the expiration of two months. But it so happens, that I have two husbands; that the one who bears the title cannot perform the duty, and that he who performs the duty cannot enjoy the title. What am I to do in this distressing case?—to sue for a divorce from M. de Lignolle, or to break upon a sudden with



Mademoiselle de Brumont. The former of those two measures, equally extreme, by covering me with indelible ridicule, would have disturbed my tranquillity; the latter would have cost me my happiness, by reducing me to widowhood all my lifetime. I was therefore not so very wrong in suppressing my resentment against the unworthy husband, and in manifesting my contentment to the seducing lover. How could I help entertaining a higher opinion of him daily? How, from the bottom of my heart, could I forbear disliking the other more and more? Where is the possibility of expelling disgust and contempt, when it is that M. de Lignolle who constantly inspires them? By what means am I to trace the paths of virtue, when it is Faublas who unceasingly impedes my approach? You are made sensible now, Baron, that I am compelled to keep forever, the husband I detest, and the lover I adore. Now that I have presented to your view the faithful picture of my situation, you will, I hope, renounce every unjust prejudice injurious to my character. If ever, on the contrary, it should happen that the public were to watch my conduct, and to find it reprehensible, you

will not give me up to the precipitancy of their decision. Ah! I beseech you, become the defender of Madame de Lignolle; show her to them such as she really is; tell everyone that her errors are not to be attributed to her; that her parents and relatives alone are responsible; and that fatality is chiefly to be accused.

Madame, answered my father, with deep concern, your confidence I deem very flattering, though bestowed upon me rather inconsiderately. I conceive that your excessive petulance, upon certain occasions, may serve you as an excuse; neither shall I conceal from you that I have been moved to compassion by the imprudent candidness of your avowals. I have hitherto blamed your irregularities, I now compassionate your passion; but you certainly do not expect me to approve of it; but do not flatter yourself that, although my indulgence should be carried so far, the public, who account for nothing the protection granted by the weak to the vicious, that public would judge you with less severity. If, therefore, you consider their opinion as something, if you are jealous of not forfeiting the friendship of your relatives, if you are desirous of preserving their esteem and

your own, of obtaining the sentiment of a good conscience, stop on the declivity of the abyss towards which you proceed rashly between two guides, always blind, and oftentimes perfidious, namely, Hope and Security. Stop, if it be not too late. My duty, Countess, is to try mildness to bring you back to the practice of your obligations, and if you will not listen to me, to use my authority to compel my son to fulfil his. Both you and he have taken your oaths at the altar to love someone alone, and that someone is neither you nor him. You have both promised that same God not to love each other. Eternal respect is due to oaths: yours, although you have violated them, are not annulled. Faublas no more belongs to you, than you belong to Faublas; and as your love for him cannot make you cease being the wife of M. de Lignolle, in the same manner the frequent infidelities of which the Chevalier has been guilty of towards Sophia, will not prevent his continuing to be her husband. To Madame de Faublas he has bound his faith; to Made-moiselle de Pontis his love.

No, sir, no! interrupted the Countess, for he adores me; he was telling me so but just now.

Let me tell you, I shall not dispute his being the husband of another; but you confess, also, at least, that I am his wife—and the mother of his child—that is what I am delighted at! That is what allows me over him an indisputable claim. It is an advantage I have over Madame de Faublas. How I envy the fate of Madame de Faublas! How far better is her portion than mine! She can boast of having him for her husband! She bears his name—his dear name! Ah! what has that Sophia, so highly favoured, done so commendable, to have deserved obtaining Faublas? and what had poor Eleanor done so very reprehensible as to deserve the torture of marrying M. de Lignolle?—Believe me, reproach not Destiny on account of your wretchedness; accuse your own weakness, and prepare, by means of a courageous situation, to recover entirely from it. In order to triumph over a fatal passion, cease to see the object of it.—Cease to see him!—I had rather die!—Cease to see him; you must try this only mode of avoiding the dire misfortunes which threaten you.—I had sooner die!—Countess, I am going to afflict you—but, I cannot conceal it from you any longer: the present

circumstances impose upon me a painful duty—I am compelled, if you refuse agreeing to the hard sacrifice which I advise, I must neglect nothing to force you to accomplish it.—Mighty powers!—I shall take the Chevalier away directly—No, you shall not—you will not be so cruel!—I shall take him away, if requisite.—It is not requisite! Who obliges you?—The necessity of securing him against too powerful seduction.—Could you find it in your heart to reduce me to despair?—I shall have fortitude enough to restore peace to your mind—You wish to deprive a woman of her lover!—It is you who wish to rob a father of his son.—Me! replied she, with great volubility; by no means! don't be deprived of him. Stay here; who told you to go away? If I have spoken the word, I did not mean it. Stop with us, it will give me infinite pleasure, and to him likewise, for—I love you much, but he loves you still more than I do. Stay with us, I will give you a very comfortable apartment, richly furnished; that of my husband; I have also a room for your daughter—send for her; he will be glad to see his sister; let her come, and Madame de Fonrose also, the whole family. Let your whole family

come and settle in my house, there will be room for them all—all, except Sophia!—Well, added she, addressing me, you don't speak a word? Join me, to entreat his stopping with us.—But, what is she saying? cried out my father. Will you permit me to speak in my turn?—There is no occasion for long speeches, replied she, with great vehemence; answer plain: Yes.—No, madam—No?—The Chevalier positively must go — Positively? — Indispensably — Indispensably? In that case I shall accompany him; let us go all three.—She is not in her proper senses. How, so, sir: Why do you say so, pray? I was very willing to keep you in my house? Why would you refuse to receive me in yours? Do you suppose it would be conferring too great an honour upon me? De you think—She is entirely deranged! Faublas, prepare to follow me.—Take care you don't, she said to me; she next addressed my father: You must take me with you, sir, or you shan't take him.—Countess, to what extremity do you wish to reduce me? What! shall I be compelled to use force?—Force! you forget yourself! I shall use force. Ah! this time you are not in your own home! I, in my turn, will ring for my servant to come

up—If it were possible, madam, that my determination was not irrevocably fixed, what you have just given me to understand, would have sufficed to make it so.—How so? Have I given you offence? It must have been most innocently, I swear. Whatever comes uppermost in my mind—out with it. Impute to my vivacity alone what may have hurt you in my discourse; indeed it proceeds neither from malice nor reflection. Think, remember that it is a terrified woman who is speaking to you, a mere child, and a child of yours! your son's wife! your daughter!—O you, whom I am so delighted in calling my father, do not take my husband away from me—no, it is Faublas whom I mean; I have agreed to his not being my betrothed husband—Baron, do not take away Faublas, I beseech you! If you knew in what agony I have spent twenty-four hours by his bedside! how many times I have trembled for his life!—and when, through my care, he has been brought to life again, when I begin to be revived with him, you would be so barbarously ungrateful as to part us—Alas! less unhappy if he had died, I should have been at least permitted to follow him—at the same hour—into the same grave.

Do not take him away, Baron: ere long, perhaps, you would repent, and your regret would be useless. I am sensible of it—neither am I afraid of saying it, I might, in a fit of despair—you are not aware how far—to what extremities my despair might carry me! Don't take him away, have mercy upon a mother; yes, said she, embracing his knees, it is in favour of, for the sake of my child that I implore you!—My father replied, with extreme agitation: What are you doing, madam? I beg you will rise, and not continue in that posture?—Ah, pursued she, you feel for my sufferings! Wherefore would you deny it? Why would you wish to conceal it from me?—Don't push me away from you so—don't turn your face aside from me—only speak a single word—

My father, in fact, was labouring under such emotion that he could not speak; but he beckoned to me to follow him, upon which the Countess ceased to weep, and her tender ejaculations were converted into accents of rage. I see you, vociferated she, rising, you seem to pity me, and only betray me, you wicked and ungrateful man!—The Baron then stammered out these few words: Did you not understand me,



my son!—No, replied she, most impetuously, neither will he, because he is not perfidious and unmerciful, like yourself!—Chevalier, quit this room—Mind you do not!—Faublas, it is a friend who begs of you to go.—Faublas, it is a lover who entreats you not to forsake her!—The Baron, seeing that I hesitated, said, in a very firm tone: I command you!—The Countess, observing that I did not show sufficient indocility, cried out to me: I forbid you.

Alas! which of the two was I to obey?—Oh! my Eleanor! it is with a broken heart that your lover disobeys you; but how can a son resist his father's order?—Madame de Lignolle, surprised and grieved at seeing that I was leaving my seat, was advancing to lay hold of me: but the Baron stopped her: she then tried to pull the bell, he prevented her: she hoped at least to be allowed to call out: with one of his hands, he stopped her mouth: she immediately fell senseless into the chair I had just left.

My father supported me on his arm; and we reached the courtyard. There I saw in our carriage, a female, who hid her face; it was Madame de Fonrose. The Baron said to her: you have not a moment to lose; go to your friend,

who has just fainted away: we are likewise in a hurry to go, and it is impossible we could wait for you. Have your dinner at the Countess's, and this evening she will lend you her berlin to carry you home. This said, the Baroness left us, and we drove off.

For a long time, my father remained plunged in a deep reverie; I next heard him heave a sigh, and mutter the following words: Poor creature! I pity her. He then cast upon me an affectionate look, and in a pretty firm tone, although still in a faltering voice, said: I forbid you, my son, seeing Madame de Lignolle any more.

I found at Nemours, my dear Adelaide; at the sight of her sorrow, mine was renewed. Oh, my Sophia! I had lost you; but notwithstanding Madame de Lignolle daily became dearer to me, you still were the one I preferred.

Madame de Fonrose returned to us in the evening; she had been at great pains to bring the Countess to recover her senses; and no little trouble to dissuade her from coming to quarrel with us. The Baroness, addressing my father, added: I believe she is capable of committing

all manner of excess within a short time, if regardless of her youth and unhappy situation, you refuse this young man leave to go, seldom indeed, but sometimes at least to offer that poor child the only consolation that may render her existence supportable.—My father, whom I was observing most attentively, made no sign, either of approbation or of discontent, in answer to the Baroness. I felt very much agitated during the whole night, as might well have been apprehended. On the day following, we returned to Paris, where I found three letters already come. The first was from Justine; my Eleanor had written the second; and as for the third, you will be obliged, the same as I was, to guess whom it came from.

“I am informed, that Monsieur le Chevalier will return in a state of convalescence; I beg he will call upon me as soon as possible. He is desired to be so kind, as to let me know when I may expect his visit, by a note, to be forwarded on the preceding day.

“Your father is a naughty man; do you suffer as much as I do from his ill treatment of us? I must tell you, my friend, that if you

do not wish my sorrows should carry me away, you will hasten to recover sufficient strength, to come and see me. Let me only see you, and I shall be satisfied. For two days past that the cruel man had parted us, I have been dying with inquietude, impatience, love, and ennui."

"Monsieur le Chevalier,—The poor young gentleman is going; but he says it will give him pleasure if he can but bid you adieu, and that he has something of importance to communicate; that perhaps, through spite, you will not come to see him, which makes him quake through fear; and that is the reason why he has commissioned me to ask you. According to a custom of the law of nature, a dying man is indulged in all his whims; and with due regard, you, who are as he says, possessed of genteel behaviour towards every one, you must bear a very hard soul within your heart, to refuse so trifling a matter to a friend, who is not void of indifference for you. It is in consequence of my waiting for you, to introduce you to my master, in order that you may cure him of his itch for talking, and have him resume and tune his jocular pipes: he who was

always as merry as a cricket, is now-a-days, as dull as an owl. By the by, it would not be amiss, without interrupting your conversation, to give him, every now and then, a tight tug, for he has taken it in his head that would do him good. You must take care, however, not to smother him, for he is still very weak all over his body. To have done with it at last, you have no time to lose, since the surgeons contend that he may die in my arms from one moment to another, like a farthing rushlight. That is the only reason why it would be totally impossible for him to wait long, till convenient for you; but that would not proceed from unpoliteness on his side, nor too great impatience neither; but do you see, when He above calls us, we must quit the company without ceremony or bargaining. In consequence of what I have been saying, if you have no objection, I shall send you his carriage, which he has not used since he has kept his bed; by this means, I shall expect you undaunted, as I remain most respectfully

“Monsieur le Chevalier,

“Your very humble and obedient servant,

“ROBERT, his *valet-de-chambre*.”

I called Jasmin: go, said I, directly to Madame de Montdesir.—Ah! ah! the lady whom you always keep waiting, as she is forever sending after you.—Thank her for her note; tell her to present my respects to the person who desired her to write it, and let her forward this letter to that same person,—observe that it is signed Robert—or rather,—I shall put it under cover—you understand me? This is to be delivered to Madame de Montdesir.—Yes, sir.—You next will go to the Countess de Lignolle.—Ah! the handsome little brunette, so droll, so alert, who the other day in the boudoir, gave you a good slap on the face—that woman must love you dearly, sir?—So she does, but you have too retentive a memory. Hark: you must not go in at Madame's, you will ask for her servant la Fleur; you will tell him that I adore his mistress.—Since you bid me tell him so, he must know it already.—You are right, he does know it.—It is therefore proper that la Fleur and I should be upon good terms. If I were to offer him a glass of wine, sir?—Offer him two, to drink my health; Jasmin, you understand me?—Yes, sir, you are the most amiable and most liberal—la Fleur must remember to

inform Madame de Lignolle, that I shall wait upon her as soon as I have concerted with Madame de Fonrose the means of procuring my female attire, and of going out without the Baron seeing me.—That part of my errand I shall not forget.—Lastly, you will go to Monsieur le Comte de Rosambert.—So much the better. That is another jovial youngster.—I grew tired of not seeing him.—Jasmin, if you would have the goodness to listen to me? You will speak to Robert, his valet de chambre, and apprise him, that notwithstanding my weak state I shall go and see his master to-morrow. I accept the offer of his carriage, Robert may send it to me in the morning at ten o'clock.—Very well, sir.—What! are you going?—Undoubtedly.—How so? to Madame de Lignolle with your livery on?—You are right. A plain dress, what a silly fellow I am!—you will tell all those people that I did not write, because I felt too tired.—Yes, sir,—stop a bit. If M. de Belcour should enquire where you are, I shall tell him that I sent you to M. de Rosambert; we must not mention the other errands.—To be sure, amorous connections are your own concern only. Your father must have nothing to do with such busi-

ness. But he will find that I have stopped long! He will scold!—Never mind, my good fellow, hear him with patience; above all things do not offer to reply.—That is what hurts me though; I don't like to be scolded when I do my duty.—The testimony of your conscience will make you amends; besides, can you object to suffer a little for my sake?—For your sake, sir, I could put up with anything; you will see what I can do and endure for your sake!

My generous man was as good as his word; notwithstanding he returned in a state of violent perspiration, far from grumbling when the Baron complained of his tardiness, he nobly confessed that he had loitered on the road. Oh! good Jasmin! what would thousands of young men of family give to have a servant like you!

M. de Belcour did not leave my room that night, until he saw me fast asleep. Owing to my troubles I awoke at daybreak. I gave a sigh to the Marchioness; many a poignant regret to my Eleanor: a thousand sweet and cruel recollections to my Sophia. But, judge of my inquietude when wishing to peruse the epistle of her ravisher, I could not find it. I had my woman's clothes brought to me, and searched



every pocket! the precious paper was not there. Ah! without doubt I have left it at Madame de Lignolle's! and if it has fallen into her hands!—merciful God!

Rosambert's servants came to fetch me at an early hour. It was Robert who introduced me into his master's bedchamber. You may speak to him a little, said he, in a mournful tone, he is not quite dead yet, but the poor young gentleman will not carry it long! he but just now had a burning fever. Oh, I beg of you, sir, don't contradict him, adopt all his ideas.—Whom are you thus whispering to? asked the Count, in almost an extinct voice.—The *valet de chambre* answered: It is Monsieur Chevalier de Faublas.—Rosambert, as soon as he heard my name, made an effort and lifted up his head; it was not without great difficulty that he stammered out the following words: I see you again! I shall, therefore, enjoy the consolation of imparting to you my last sentiments! Come, Faublas, draw near to me—confess without any partiality: Is not that ticklish Amazon a great savage and a romantic creature, thus, for a mere affair of social pleasantry, to take the life of one of her most constant adorers.

Here Rosambert recruited his spirits; his articulation, which at first was weak, slow, and embarrassed, became, on a sudden, loud and distinct. That Madame de B—, continued he, that Madame de B— who is so well acquainted with the world and its ways; with gallantry and its code; with the rights of our sex, and the privileges of her own; tell me, could she not, in good conscience, calculate that on account of the success of her last attempt, she and I were entirely quits. Punished in proportion to the offence she had committed, could she not inwardly confess to herself that, in truth, we should mutually forget the little tricks with which she first had enlivened the grand work of our rupture in one evening, and when, authorised by her example, I thought myself entitled to patch up a reconciliation adopted and revoked the same night, and at the same moment? How came it, then, that, forgetful of the general law, and of her own principles, she has formed the strange determination of coming, like a lunatic, at the peril of her life, so dear to love, and attack mine, which is not quite indifferent to the God of Amours? Who has suggested that truly infernal design? Honour! It is not at

the place where I struck Madame de B— that she ever would have thought of placing hers. She is too well versed in the widely differing science of words and things. It must, therefore, have been the demon of self-love! That I knew, every degraded female was ever ready blindly to follow its absurd advice. Yet I could never have guessed that it had power enough to invite a fair lady to murder whoever might be proud of gaining over her some advantage which might have hurt her vanity.

I protest to you, my friend, that my only regret is to have offered to Madame de B— a too lenient affront only. I do not pretend to say, nevertheless, that my behaviour, upon that occasion, was totally irreproachable; but I maintain that you alone had a right to complain of me. Faublas! what shall I say? I could not withstand the temptation, I only considered the sweet pleasure of catching the artful woman, as she had escaped from me, by a variety of strange perfidious artifices. Those considerations, which might have stopped me, did not even occur to my mind, entirely occupied with the idea of my whimsical thoughts of vengeance, and it was not till I had found my mistress

again that I acknowledged having wronged my friend. What a dreadful punishment, however, has followed the most pardonable of all faults! What an enemy has espoused the quarrel of Faublas! and how that enemy has avenged it! Alas! did Rosambert, for having inconsiderately occasioned you some transient trouble, deserve dying, at the age of twenty-three, at the hand of a woman?

These last words were spoken in so feeble a voice, that I needed all my attention to be able to hear them. My heart was moved with compassion. Rosambert, my dear friend, I pity you.—That is not enough, replied he, you must forgive me—Oh, from the bottom of my heart.—You, moreover, must restore me to your former friendship.—With great pleasure.—You will come and see me every day, until it is over with me.—What an idea! At our time of life, nature has so many resources! hope!—Why, truly, we always hope; but, notwithstanding, some fine morning we must bid our friends adieu.—Repeat, Faublas, that you forgive.—I repeat—That you love me as you did formerly?—As I did formerly!—Give me your word of honour.—Upon my word of honour.—Promise,

above all things, that without speaking a word of it to the Marchioness, you will come, just to see me breathe my last.—Rosambert, I promise. —*Foi de gentilhomme?—Foi de gentilhomme.*

Well! he exclaimed gaily, you will pay me more than one visit. Come, Robert, open the sashes; draw the curtains, help me to rise. Chevalier, you don't congratulate me! Is not my *valet de chambre* a man of talents? What say you of his style of writing? Would you believe it, his letter has cost me ten minutes of deep meditation? My physicians told me yesterday, they would be answerable for my life. M. Robert immediately took up his pen: Why but, Faublas, wherefore this cold and serious air? Are you sorry for my recovering once more? When you forgave me this day, was it upon condition that I should get buried to-morrow? Do you find that the horrid woman who has overpowered me has not inflicted sufficient punishment? In order that you should be fully revenged, was it requisite that she should kill me? I did not kill her when her life was at my disposal: I only wounded her delicate person! —gently wounded her!—oh! very gently! I was certain she would not die of it, but I am

very sorry she felt so grieved at her trifling accident as to become crazy in consequence. Was it because I had once beat her in her own art, that despairing forever of being able to use the arms of her sex, she took up those of mine to attack me? It is true that she has lately acquired the immortal glory of having almost dislocated M. de Rosambert's shoulder; most undoubtedly she derives infinite honour from her prowess, but as to profit, I do not see any. Faublas, I tell you now, as a secret, and at some future period, perhaps, the Marchioness herself will condescend to own it; by changing the nature of our combat, Madame de B— has hurt herself more than she has me. When an old quarrel exists between two young persons of different sexes, love takes great care to revive it, never to put an end to it. The two charming enemies become irreconcilable, cease not to pursue one another, to join, and to engage. Everybody knows that in this contest, which seems to be unequal, it is not the weakest antagonist who triumphs the less frequently. If, sometimes, the female warrior, overtired, is seen to totter for a moment, the successful wrestler then wears himself out; neither does it fall to his lot to be

capacitated to dissemble his defeat, to palliate it by excuses, or to rise more formidable after having had a fall. Alas! it is all over! I must no more measure arms with Madame de B—. The foolish woman has entrusted the sanguinary god of war with the care of managing our interests, and her revenge. Venus will no longer summon us to her sweet exercise; Mars henceforth will ordain our struggles—serious and bloody struggles. Instead of Cupids, we shall in future have furies to be our witnesses, and the high road will be our field of battle, instead of a boudoir; our arms, even those courteous arms, of which we both, close to each other, made so jovial a use, will be exchanged for murderous pistols, which, at a distance—Pistols! What! will you go to Compiegne a second time?—Will I! how can you ask me such a question?—What, Rosambert! would you go and fight a woman?—You are cracking your jokes: that woman is a grenadier! Besides, I have promised—I have promised, Faublas, it matters not to what god—How so, Rosambert? will you go and expose your life—to threaten!—Your opinion therefore, Faublas, is that I am not in conscience bound?—

Certainly!—Well, make yourself easy; it is mine likewise; I believe that our most scrupulous casuists would not deem me bound to fulfil a ridiculous and barbarous engagement, exacted by force, and surprised by artifice: I prefer leaving my heroic adversary glorying at my defeat, to committing myself with a woman, to send her into the other world, or to revisiting myself a foreign country. You moreover know, that I am not of a sanguinary disposition, that I hate duels, and I verily believe, that if I were obliged to fight again, death would appear to me preferable to a second exile. Ah, my friend! how tedious have been the days of our separation! Gracious God! what a dull country is that I am come from! How dull that England, so boasted! Go there, if you like discoursing on philosophy, talkative politicians, and lying daily papers. Go there, if you wish to see noblemen at fisty-cuffs with their chairmen in the arena of pugilism: popular farces in the double sanctuary\* of the law, churchyards on the stages,

\* Both Houses of Parliament. If anyone was so unjust as to reprobate me for the superficial and decisive cutting manner in which Count Rosambert judges and denigrates the second European nation, I shall undoubtedly be per-



and heroes on the scaffold. Go to London, endeavour to find out our manners and fashions, strangely disguised, or exaggerated most ridiculously by awkward imitators. Go, Faublas, and may you fashion automaton *petits-maitres*! may you give life to their female statues! Should you, modern Pygmalion, succeed so far, how soon will they satiate you with pleasures, granted without obstacles, tasted without art, and repeated without variety! How they will overwhelm you with unlimited gratitude, and endless affection! I would venture a bet, that on the second night, you will find satiety in the arms of an English woman. What is there more frigid than beauty, when graces do not supply it with motion and life? What is there more insipid than love itself, if it be not enlivened by a little inconstancy and coquetry? That my Lady Barrington, for instance, is a Venus—but I feel too much fatigued now; I shall relate to you to-morrow, the history of our eternal connection, which would have lasted to the present time, if I had not brought it to a

mitted to observe, without offering offence to anyone, that it is a young French nobleman who is speaking, in 1784.

conclusion by means of a new and ludicrous scheme.\*

Chevalier, added he, holding out his hand to me, I wanted to see you and to revisit France again. My happy country, I shall find it so, is the only country for pleasure. We do not enjoy the right of bringing our peers to the bar; but every morning, at the toilet of some fair lady, we commence the trial of a novel, published on the preceding day, or the new piece which is to be performed on the next. We do not harangue our parliament houses, but in the evening we go and decide at the play-houses, and in company: we do not read thousands of daily publications; but the scandalous chronicle of each day, enlivens our too short suppers.

I confess that it is not by their noble stature, and the dignity of their deportment, that our French women generally are remarkable; they possess that which is less admired, but more sought for; their shape, their figure, the vivacity of nymphs, the carelessness, taste, and elas-

\* You will know of this anecdote, if ever I am allowed to write the history of Rosambert. Then probably you will hear of Dorothea's adventures. But at present, I am prohibited. The present time is the arch of—the Lord.

ticity of the graces; they are endowed from their birth, with the art of pleasing, and of inspiring us all with the desire of loving them indiscriminately. They may be reproached, indeed, with being totally unacquainted in general with those great passions, which in London, in the course of a week, will bring a romantic heroine to her grave; but they know how to commence an intrigue, and to put an end to it in proper time; they know how to provoke by means of giddiness, to elude by artifice, to advance in order to engage, to retreat with a view of hastening their defeat when they wish to make it certain, to defer it, that it may be enhanced in value, to grant gracefully, to refuse with voluptuousness, occasionally to give, sometimes to allow a theft, continually to excite desires, never to extinguish them; frequently to retain a lover by coquetry, sometimes to bring him back by inconstancy, in fine, to lose him with resignation, to dismiss him skilfully; either through caprice, or for want of occupation to take to him again, to lose him a second time, without ill humour, or without scandal to forsake him again.

Ah! I wanted to see my native country again.

I daily become convinced of it; in my country alone, I shall find mistresses alternately fickle and affectionate, frivolous and rational, passionate and decent, timid and bold, reserved and weak; mistresses who, possessed of the great art of reproaching themselves at every instant under a different form, occasion you to relish a thousand times, the keen pleasures of infidelity; dissembling, deceitful, and perfidious mistresses, as witty and adorable as Madame de B—. The fortunate fair of Versailles and Paris, are alone allowed to meet with elegant young men, void of pretension, handsome without foppishness, complaisant without meanness, frequently inconsistent, only because an opportunity will offer, indefatigable, though apparently effeminate, and with a modest air enterprising to an extreme; young men who surprise and ingratiate themselves with the one by their high sentiments, with the other by their sprightliness, with a third by their audacity: with the mistrustful and timorous Emilia in her very drawing-room, which is open at all times; with the coquet Arsinoë, not far from the conjugal bed, where the jealous husband is watching; with the innocent Zulma in the alcove, where her watch-

ful mother is just gone to sleep; young men, who favoured with the most expansive sensibility, can idolise two or three women at a time; in short accomplished lovers, such as Faublas, and——God forbid me! I was going to quote Rosambert; but I stop: I am sensible it would be polluting two great names, were I to associate my unworthy one to them.

Must I speak alone forever? Come, my good friend, take a seat, and speak in your turn. Tell me, what has become of the fair Sophia?—Alas!—Unhappy husband! I understand you. What have you done with her rival?—With her rival? with her rival? Why—but—That's it, added he, laughing, he feels inclined to ask me which: that is as it should be. When he made his entrance into the world, he was endowed with every qualification, and his very first adventure brought him into celebrity. Happy mortal! Let us see how many mistresses he has got; let us count Sophia's rivals; how many are they?—Only one, my friend.—One! what! does the Marchioness still hold you in her chains?—The Marchioness! hold, Monsieur le Comte; I don't like to hear you speak of the Marchioness.

The tone in which I had made that answer,

announced I was in an ill-humour, which however was calmed, for I still loved Rosambert, and his cheerfulness always pleased me. But his many questions to be informed of what had happened to me since our separation, were superfluous. I had fortitude enough to refuse gratifying his curiosity.—When he saw that I was ready to go: You do not consider, said he, that without being at the trouble of asking, I shall henceforth be made acquainted with all your doings. Thanks to myself, to the Marchioness, and above all, thanks to your superior merits, added he, with a laugh, for I do not pretend in the least to depreciate your abilities, you are become so notorious a character that the public will inquire with curiosity what becomes of you; but till such time as I hear from that public of your good fortune, Chevalier, I believe it is incumbent upon me to repeat it: if you love your wife, take care of Madame de B—; your wife, I apprehend, will never have a more formidable enemy. Farewell, Faublas! I rely upon your word, I shall expect you tomorrow; and remember well that the Marchioness is not to know that we are good friends again. Adieu.

As I had just returned home, I received a note from Madame de Montdesir. The Marchioness had commissioned her to inform me that the surgeons having two days since permitted the Count to be removed to Paris, he must not of course be so bad as described to be in the pretended letter of the pretended *valet de chambre*. Madame de B— desired me, in consequence, not to pay a visit to Rosambert, as requested.—I—I shall not—tell her I shall pay him that visit.—Such was the insidious answer which the tardy messenger took home with him.

Meanwhile, the recollection of Sophia haunted me without interruption; and, as soon as I was left by myself, a thousand regrets assailed me; I must confess, however, that the sweet hope of soon embracing my Eleanor, and perhaps also, for I should not conceal from my reader one-half of my feelings, perhaps also the desire of seeing the Marchioness again, lessened my chagrin and contributed to restore my powers.

The frequent messages brought by la Fleur and from Justine made me conscious that on both sides I was expected with an almost equal patience; but alas! if ever you have experienced

to what degree passions, when opposed, become more ardent, pity the lover of Madame de Lignolle and the friend of Madame de B—.

M. de Belcour, moved at the sorrows I was allowed to mention, but unfeeling for my secret sufferings, lamented with me the loss of Sophia, but would not hear the stifled complaints which the absence of Eleanor drew from me. Notwithstanding my indirect solicitations, and the representations of the Baroness, my father, inexorable this once, persevered in not leaving me at liberty for a moment. He would come and sit in my apartment during the whole forenoon, and in the afternoon accompanied me when I went out to take a walk. In this manner was my convalescence prolonged for a whole week.

On the Friday before Easter, a beautiful morning announced that the last day of Longchamps would be magnificent. Madame de Fonrose, who came to dine with us, proposed going to the Bois de Boulogne; we shall take the Chevalier with us, said she to my father. Too unhappy in my mind to seek boisterous amusements, I was preparing to beg to be excused; but a look from the Baroness decided me to accept; and M. de Belcour having left us for a moment,



Madame de Fonrose imparted the news, so much the more agreeable as least expected:—She is going, because she hopes you will.—The Countess?—Who then? Perhaps you would rather it were the Marchioness?—No, no. The Countess! I shall have the happiness of seeing her!—Of seeing her! is that all you wish for?—All I wish for—yes—since it is impossible to—To! interrupted she, and if it were not impossible to—I would be in heaven!—In heaven, repeated she, well, you will go—to heaven! But let us agree upon what is previously to be done here below. First of all, don't think of burying yourself in a dark berlin with that wearisome Madame de Fonrose, and that troublesome Baron de B—, you don't hear me?—I beg your pardon, I am all attention.—I believe him! he quakes with impatience! He looks as if he would wish to devour my words—you will arrive on your charger. After you will have capered for a while at some distance from a gig in which your friend intends to come; after the Countess will have got intoxicated with the pleasure of seeing you, all at her ease, managing your beautiful horse with infinite grace; hers, whether she governs it worse or better,

will run away with her on a sudden. For a time, without moving forward, you will not lose sight of the fugitive vehicle; but a moment after, your own horse will run away with you too, not in the same direction, though, sir.—Not in the same direction!—No, yet don't fret; after long windings, an hour after—a whole hour, the animal that is not quite stupid will bring Faublas exactly where his Eleanor will be waiting for him; I leave you to guess.—To her house, perhaps?—What an idea! Is it really you who have been speaking? To mine own home, young man. There you will find only my Swiss and my Agatha, two good folks who never see, say, or hear but what pleases me; people whom I can be answerable for.—To your home! how thankful.—Truly, said she, in a tone almost serious, I hope you will act like rational beings. If I thought you were going only to play childish tricks, I would not permit you to enter my drawing-room. (She burst out laughing.) But I know you both. Your time will be devoted to business of importance, you will be making one, two, or three charades, what do I know all that Faublas is capable of doing? Hold, here is the key of my boudoir. No

scandalous behaviour, of all things; my character—I am very tender of a good character!

M. de Belcour returned; we spoke of Longchamps again; I manifested an extreme desire of making my appearance there on horseback. My father observed that too violent an exercise might prove injurious; but he made no further objection, when I represented that I should be spared the greatest fatigue, if he condescended to take me in his carriage as far as the grille de Chaillot. It was farther still, it was at the entrance of the wood, that Jasmin went to wait for me with my horse. The Baron at the moment I left his carriage, knew the Porte-Maillot again, and as if he anticipated the hazardous meeting that awaited me: this, said he with a deep sigh, is a spot that will be present to my recollection forever! Here I have spent one of the most painful and one of the sweetest moments in my life.

I hastened to look for Madame de Lignolle, met her within a short time, and she likewise soon saw with a pleasure, not easily to be described, her lover pass close to her gig. Ye young folks who enjoy the triumphs of Faublas, make ready for him your warmest congratula-

tions. He who already was ravished with the pleasure of beholding the Countess, and of being admired by her, had still the additional happiness of overhearing several people, as they looked at her, exclaim: Oh! what a charming little woman! If such as paid her a compliment so greeting to my ears, had paid the least attention to me, they might have observed that I thanked them with a smile, a proud smile which seemed to answer: She is my Eleanor! that woman whom you find so charming is mine; and without being sensible of it, I repeated: Charming little woman! charming! that eulogium was intended for her alone. Her dress, her vehicle, her attendants have no share in it.—Her attendants! she has but one single servant, the confidant of our amours, the discreet la Fleur. Her carriage! it is the little gig that brought her to me in the forest of Compiègne. Her dress! it is never extravagantly rich, but always elegant and tasteful. She is come hither as she is seen at home, decked in all her native attractions. How becoming that gown of linen, less white than her skin! How I like to see her wear instead of diamonds, those flowers, symbols of her adolescence hardly

commenced; those early blossomed violets, and those rose-buds, which seem to have naturally grown upon her head. Ah! in the midst of worldly pomp, how delighted I feel to behold her in plain attire, and in the most modest equipage, the benefactress of a thousand vassals.

But what Deity is that, carried in a superb whisky, which persecuting chance has placed exactly before the Countess, in the long and double row of carriages? And who is the nymph that occupies the brilliant phaeton, which comes immediately behind the Countess?

I went up first to the magnificent car: a superb female offered herself to my view in all the splendour of dress, and all the lustre of beauty. The first sight of her imposed on all a silence of admiration; the brief exclamations of enthusiasm were next heard; those were followed by a slight murmuring, when on a sudden every one repeated: Yes, there she is; that's her, that's the Marchioness de B—.

Who, however, contended with her for the honours of the day at Longchamps? The pretty woman in the phaeton. Negligently seated in a lilac-coloured shell, silver plated, she carelessly handled the reins, so rich that one could hardly

believe her delicate hands were capable of supporting the weight of them for a long while. She appeared playfully to curb four piebald horses, superbly caparisoned, covered with flowers and ribbons; four horses full of mettle, which proudly raising their heads, and beating the ground with their feet, covering their bits with foam, seemed to feel indignant at being led by a woman and a young lad. Everyone could discover that the nymph's countenance was not that of a person of rank, and that she had more eclat than real beauty: but no one could tell whether there was more indelicacy in her deportment than wantonness in her looks; whether there was more opulence than elegance in the unbounded luxury of equipage and dress. At any rate Madame de B— could you have guessed that, that woman loaded with plumes, embroidery and diamonds, mounted on a triumphal car, surrounded by young noblemen, pursued by the joyous applause of the crowded multitude, was the little girl who for a twelve month had been your waiting woman? M. de Valbrun must have ruined himself! I passed several times near Madame de B—'s whisky: she looked as if she had not seen me, and I had

prudence enough not to bow to her: but curious most likely of ascertaining whether I had come there on her account, the Marchioness cast her inquisitive looks on all sides. As she turned round she saw in her humble gig Madame de Lignolle, whom she honoured with a gracious smile; and on her splendid car Madame de Montdesir, whom she cast a protecting glance at. There was every reason to believe that Madame de B—, so near the Countess to whose jealous vivacity she was no stranger; and not far from Justine, who might indulge some imprudent familiarity, did not think herself safe. What is certain is, she got out of that line, and drove a little higher up. Perhaps she determined upon this measure, because she perceived at a distance her husband advancing towards me.

I intended at first to retire, that I might avoid meeting the unwelcome Marquis, but upon second thoughts, apprehensive lest he might, without a cause, suspect me of being afraid, I proceeded along, I even thought proper to advance slowly, and to look fiercely at the enemy, as he drew near me. I notwithstanding was resolved, as well may be imagined, to let M. de B— pass by, in case he did not accost me.

He did though. Monsieur le Chevalier, I am very glad that chance—Say no more, Monsieur le Marquis, I understand you; but what signifies that word chance, pray? methinks it is not quite impossible to meet me about the town; and besides, whoever has anything very pressing to say to me, is always sure of finding me at home.—Why, indeed, I wished to go to you.—Who could have prevented you?—Who? my wife.—Why then sir, you now think the Marchioness was wrong?—Not very wrong, in one sense. She had her reasons, you may depend on it.—Her reasons?—to invite me not to pay you a visit; whereas I had mine for wishing to meet you somewhere.—Our meeting then, as you were saying just now, is very happy?—So it is, because I wanted to have an explanation with you.—Directly, if you choose, M. le Marquis.—With all my heart.—Let us withdraw.—I have no objection.—but I must beg your pardon a moment.—For what?

As I was going, I thought I could not dispense bowing to Madame de Lignolle, and giving her to understand, by my signs, that I would soon return.

M. de B— resumed: You are continually



looking on that side. Most likely it is that handsome lady in the phaeton that engages your attention! I am come in your way.—No untimely jokes, M. le Marquis.—I don't joke! Let us stop here.—Here! the place will not be comfortable.—Why not? Nobody will hear us —But everybody will see us.—What does that signify?—You think it is immaterial; well, just as you please, I suppose you have brought your pistols?—My pistols?—To be sure. Neither you nor I have swords.—What do we want with pistols or swords, M. le Chevalier?—Are we not going to fight?—To fight! quite on the reverse, sir: I repent having fought you before —Indeed!—I repent having quarrelled with you without cause or reason.—Ah!—To have been the cause of your exile.—Ah! ah!—And subsequently of your imprisonment.—You must own, M. le Marquis, that I could not have guessed all that.—That is the reason why I have been looking after you ever since your liberation from the Bastille.—Indeed you are too kind.—And as I told you before, I would have gone to your house if my wife—The Marchioness was very right to dissuade you; it would have been carrying matters too far—I

believe not! In my opinion, a gentleman cannot be too hasty in repairing an offence. You have experienced it yourself; I am very irascible, a single word throws me into a rage, I am angry before I hear an explanation, but the moment after I am calmed, and candidly acknowledge my having been wrong. All my friends will tell you I gain by being known; at bottom I am a good-natured soul.—I am fully convinced of that.—Say you forgive me.—Are you in earnest?—I beg you will speak the word—I shall never be able to——What! you will never forgive me.—That is not what I mean.—Listen to me. I have confessed my wrongs, let me now mention my good offices: I have been the promoter of your emancipation from the Bastille.—You! Monsieur le Marquis?—My very self. I threw myself at my wife's knees, to prevail upon her to solicit your release.—And you succeeded in persuading her?—Why truly, it was not without great pains; however, I must do her justice: she afterwards took the business to heart as much as I had, and pressed the new minister with unrelenting ardour.—She is said to be in high favour with the new minister?—In very high favour! They sometimes are

closeted together for hours; that wife of mine is a woman of great merit; I knew her well when I married her; she had a promising look, and the Marchioness has fulfilled all that those looks of hers had promised. *Apropos*, if you should wish for some situation, or a pension, or a *lettre de cachet*,—I thank you kindly—You need but speak the word: Madame de B— will have a private conversation with—I return you a thousand thanks—Now, to return to our first business, but you don't listen to me!—I was looking yonder, at that elderly lady: is not she the Marchioness d'Armincours?—I don't know her——It is her; pray, Marquis don't let us turn our eyes that way again.—I understand you well! you don't wish to be obliged to go and pay your compliments to the dowager?—I would not like it much.—I shall resume my former subject: through me you got liberated from the Bastille; and had not I already been used according to my deserts? Had not I received a thrust from your sword?—I assure you, I was exceedingly sorry to have been forced.—That was a masterly thrust! Do you know it nearly cost me my life?—I give you my word of honour, it would have been to me an eternal

subject of sorrow.—So then, you bore me no animosity?—Not the least.—How then do you refuse to forgive me?—I am quite ready to forgive and forget.—I am happy to hear it, M. le Chevalier.—And do you forgive me also, M. le Marquis?—If I forgive you! But, from my wife's own declaration, in the whole of this affair, your wrongs towards me were but very slight, and towards herself very—very slight indeed.

This conversation, which at first I thought rather unpleasant, I now found very amusing, it excited my curiosity; yet I was sensible that Madame de Lignolle, wondering already at my absence, must be waiting for my return with killing impatience, and, if I delayed much longer, attempt some nonsensical trick.

M. le Marquis, said I, now that we have made it up, let us join the throng.—We shall talk more at our ease here.—We shall be quite as well yonder.—I was right when I said that the pretty lady stuck to his heart! exclaimed M. de B—.

In fact, it was near the damsel in the phaeton that I brought him back; but it was the lady in the gig, who drew my whole attention, and I

have no need to tell, that she was delighted at seeing me again. I, nevertheless, could perceive, that the stranger whom she observed was following me, occasioned her some inquietude. Madame de Montdesir also appeared extremely flattered at the new homage which I seemed to pay her, by returning a second time, to swell the number of her admirers; but as soon as she recognised her former master in the cavalier who accompanied me, she smothered some bursts of laughter, to cast upon us both very significant glances. Meanwhile the Marquis was saying to me again: Towards the Marchioness and myself your wrongs were but very slight, such as any other young man.—Is it not true, sir, would not everyone in my place, have acted as I did?—Undoubtedly. But it was M. de Rosambert, who, through the whole, has behaved uncommonly ill; of course, I will never make it up with him. M. du Portail is not altogether free from blame neither.—He is not, indeed.—So you confess it now?—Most assuredly.—On that fatal day, when I met you all in the Tuilleries, M. du Portail should have preserved more presence of mind, have drawn me aside, and have informed me that the honour and repose of a whole

family obliged him to speak that untruth: could I have guessed?—Certainly not.—Your sister would not have done amiss neither, if she had whispered a word in mine ear; but the young lady was afraid, her father was there! You, M. le Chevalier—Ah! me now!—Let me hear what you have to say!—No, no, speak yourself.—After you.—By no means, M. le Marquis, I have interrupted you.—Don't mention it, go on.—Go on yourself—I beg of you.—Let me request—Well then! you, M. le Chevalier, were not bound to tell me a secret; of course, it was rather unbecoming in you to apprise me of the little slips of your sister—this hurts you, but I am no babbler! I have given my word of honour—and beware of being angry with the Marchioness, I have not surprised your secrets from her, in the first place! It was not for the mere sake of gossiping, that she entrusted me with them.—I believe so, I believe that the Marchioness is incapable of committing an act of inconsiderate indiscretion.—Incapable! you have spoken the word—the wanton doings of your sister, a dangerous frolic, which M. de Rosambert had advised; and the last story, told by M. du Portail, had, in my estimation,

strangely exposed the Marchioness. Oh! I have begged her pardon a hundred times, and I reproach myself daily; I accused my wife, the most virtuous of women! If it were only from principles, one might question—but, added he, speaking very low, her virtue is solid, it proceeds from a frigid constitution; for, would you believe it, through mere complaisance it is, that Madame de B— will grant me now and then a night; to me, who am her husband, and whom she adores! Yet I accused her. It was requisite, therefore, that for the sake of her own justification, she should relate to me your little family troubles, which I was partly acquainted with already.—What occasions me great satisfaction, M. le Marquis, is to hear from your own mouth, that I was not held to reveal to you the slips of Mademoiselle du Portail—Say no more, Mademoiselle du Portail, you see that I am acquainted with the business—Well then, Mademoiselle de Faublas, since you will have it so.—That's it.—In the first place, you should not; and next, if you had appeared disposed to solicit an explanation, I, who in a pet, was anxious to fight it out, would, perhaps, have been so unjust as to suspect you of wanting courage.

It is most essential for a young man to display undaunted steadiness in his first affair of honour; and in this, I said so to the Marchioness, who was forced to acknowledge it, you behaved in every respect as the bravest of men. You are a man of true courage, and whoever is a connoisseur must read it in your countenance. I entertain a very high esteem for you, and so does my wife. I would willingly invite you to come and see us; but the public are so stupid! Whenever they have been pleased to allot such a lover to such a woman, they never will retract. I find numbers of people, who, through mere complaisance only, do not contradict me when I affirm to them that I am not—and though you were to protest the same yourself, they would not believe you, and yet no one, except the Marchioness, knows as much about it as you do.

But only observe the extreme difference: now that I am made easy in my mind, concerning your adventure, you, and a hundred thousand young men more amiable still, if there are any, would take their solemn oath in vain, before they could persuade me that they have obtained the favours of the Marchioness. I have already



told you how many reasons I had to be convinced of Madame de B—'s virtue; there is another, which alone appears to me as strong as all the rest put together: I sometimes take it into my head to look at myself in the glass, and I don't find in my physiognomy one feature, one single feature that indicates my being a—  
—By Jove! M. de B— does not perceive at all, that he looks like a fool! and M. de B— is a knowing one. But pay me a little more attention; your eyes are constantly turned towards the fair damsel! Methinks that she now and then looks at you. Nay, she winks at you!  
—Not at all, Marquis, it is you whom she challenges. I don't think so; you are a much handsomer man than I am. At your time of life I did not look amiss, but now you have the advantage of blooming youth. I believe, however, that you were not mistaken, that I have my share in glances of the princess. I must confess, candidly, that I begin to feel rather awkward! This is quite a new thing to me; she must not have been long on the town. What's her name?—Her name? I can't tell.—Where does she live?—I don't know.—But yet you knew her?—Ah! as those creatures are known,

by reminiscence——yes, I think I recollect my going frequently to sup at a certain house, where, sometimes finding her within my reach, I would set her to play, much about the same time as I had taken a fancy to one certain Justine, you know!—Yes, yes, one of the Marchioness's women, that little jade whom you would come to cajole even in my hotel. Oh! you young rake, I behaved too kindly at the commissary's.—Say whatever you please, M. le Marquis, I cannot be persuaded, that beauty is entirely unknown to you. Do me the pleasure, therefore, to draw nearer, and to look at her full in the face.—Why, faith, you are right: I have seen that sprightly little face. We were speaking of Justine just now; this girl has a false air about her——Methinks there is a great likeness—Great! no—I find it so.—Oh! but cried he, most vehemently, you are no physiognomist! Since we are now speaking of likeness, do you know of two individuals, between whom I find a very striking one? Your sister, and you.—Ah! that may be well mentioned.—The most clever might be deceived. I, who am the first in the kingdom for the science of physiognomy, have been mistaken, several times mistaken!

It appears, that your sister is very fond of pleasure. When she is tired, pale, and worn out, one may then find out the difference between you two. But when she enjoys her good health and spirits, the devil himself might see you side by side, without being able to determine which is which! *Apropos*, will you mention our meeting to your sister?—If agreeable to you—Do me the pleasure to tell her, that notwithstanding the grievous mistakes which her first disguise had occasioned, I love her with all my heart; and although your father is rather hot, he may rely upon my sincere esteem: even tell M. du Portail that I hold no grudge against him.—M. Connoisseur, look in that gig before the phaeton, look at that young woman; that is a sweet figure; that is what may be called a charming little person! not so finely dressed as the other, but much prettier, and she does not look like one of the frail sisterhood.—A lady of fashion? Zounds! I know that livery! I am very glad, added he, in a tone of inward gratification, that for a long time also, this lady has been repeatedly looking at us. One would think that she wishes to speak to us.

Madame de Lignolle, indeed, was out of pa-

tience, and endeavoured to make me understand, by her signs, that I must, at any price, get rid of my troublesome companion, to go instantly and join her at the place of rendezvous, whither, tired of waiting, she was going herself. Several times yielding to her natural impetuosity, the Countess would rise, and stand nearly out of her gig. In the meantime, Madame de Montdesir, from the top of her vehicle, could notice the impatience of her rival. I do not think that it was possible for her then to see that it was Madame de Lignolle who attracted my whole attention; but no doubt she suspected as much.

It was with a view of ascertaining the truth that she immediately had her postilion ordered to quit the line, and to try to pass before the gig. During a few seconds, he kept close to it on the same line, and then passed before it. Justine, who then saw plainly Madame de Lignolle, took the liberty of saluting her with an air of familiarity; she even dared, whilst looking at her with insolent affectation, to burst out into impertinent fits of laughter.

I felt indignant; I was going; I cannot tell all I was going to do. The Countess did not allow me time to expose her by avenging. Too

high-spirited tamely to endure a similar insult, she immediately cried out "*Gare!*"—pushed her horse on, and, with her whip, cut Madame de Montdesir's face, and at the same time ran so violently against the light phaeton that one of the wheels was broke. The vehicle was overturned; the idol fell; I apprehended for a moment lest her head might be broken also. Most happily, as she fell, Justine mechanically threw her arms forward, her hands prevented her face being much injured, which had already been maltreated more than enough. It so happened, however, that by an accident quite comical, the feet of the nymph remained, I cannot tell how, fastened to the upper part of the overthrown vehicle. In a like posture, therefore, nothing could hinder her petticoats from falling over her shoulders, while uncovering another part; and, sportful zephyrs having timely agitated the fine linen that remained alone over her fair skin, Madame de Montdesir exhibited——our delicate tongue prevents us——it would be an unpardonable act of rudeness to call by its name what Madame de Montdesir exhibited: I nevertheless shall say what I am permitted, namely, that the whole assembly, finding this modern

*The vehicle was overturned; the idol fell.*

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Antinous\* very pretty, applauded its apparition by loud clapping of hands.

Some young men, nevertheless, flew to the assistance of the unhappy sufferer; I myself felt moved at the sight of her discomfiture, dismounted to offer her a succouring hand.—Wait a moment, said M. de B—, I shall go with you, for I feel for her, and, as I told you before, I have seen that face somewhere.—Now, Monsieur le Marquis, this I cannot put up with from a physiognomist. In good conscience, can you call that a face? However, whether you are obstinate in maintaining that it is or not, I declare that it is not entirely unknown to me, and I question your ever having seen it.

Justine had already been placed on her legs again, when I came close to her.—Ah! she exclaimed, as soon as she saw me: Ah! M. de Faublas! what a figure she has brought me to!——

I interrupted her, and said to her in a very low tone of voice: My dear child, you have no more than what you deserve; yet mind not to

\* In case you should have forgotten this passage of the "History of Rome," consult the book; you will find it worth your while.

mention the name of the Countess, for if you do, upon my honour, you will not get off at so cheap a rate.—Ah! replied Justine, with an accent of deep despair: So then you think she has acted right!

She had pronounced my name several times; several voices repeated it; it immediately was circulated through the whole assembly, and flew from mouth to mouth. On a sudden, the crowd which encircled Madame de Montdesir gathered round me, so that the Marquis and I had scarcely elbow-room enough to cross our horses, and could only proceed at a slow pace. The number of gazers increased at every minute. Young and old, males and females, horsemen and pedestrians, all thronged before me; carriages even stopped. Never did our most renowned heroes, Destaing, La Fayette, Suffren, and a thousand more, on their return from their glorious expeditions, see a more prodigious affluence of people collected around them in the public walks. And yet it was—oh, the most light-headed of all nations!—it was only upon Mademoiselle du Portail that you were lavishing such honours!

What young man, however, could have had

such a command over himself as to reject the charms of such a triumph? I felt intoxicated for a while; for a moment I felt proud at the sight of so many young men, who, known to possess the art of pleasing, and famous on account of their amours, seemed to proclaim me as their supreme chief. The ladies especially—the fair ladies!—it was with transport that I saw I was the object of their attention. The lively desire of being still more deserving of it must have supplied me with additional graces in my deportment, and fresh expression to my countenance; with a milder look I must have answered their caressing glances, which seem to prognosticate forever sweet connections; with a more greedy ear I must have devoured the enchanting eulogiums bestowed upon my external personal merits.

But forgive me, my Eleanor; forgive my mistake; the illusion was not lasting. Could Faublas tarry for a long time at Longchamps? Could he stop long, detained by the twofold deceitful illusions of vanity and coquetry, when love, impatient love, was waiting for him in Paris, to procure no less flattering triumphs, and more solid enjoyments.

M. le Marquis, what think you of our removing from this crowd?—I have not the least objection, most willingly; but how comes it that you are known by so many people?—You know this part of the world. Whatever is not absolutely common, occasions a great bustle, and even four-and-twenty hours will bring a man into high repute: our duel, my exile, my imprisonment——

He interrupted me: Was it a mistake? Was it not my name?—Yes, it was your name that rang into my ears, and which is repeated aloud by two thousand people.—Two thousand! no! repeated he, with apparent satisfaction: Yet I do not wonder at it; I have such myriads of acquaintances.—The rumour goes increasing; dear me, what a terrible noise!—It is because all these people are glad to see us together! Yes, I can read it in their physiognomies, they are pleased; it makes them happy to be certain of a reconciliation having taken place between us. In fact, it was a great pity that the two men in France the most——M. le Marquis, I believe, as you say rightly, that they are pleased; but let us make haste, to avoid hearing more of their plaudits.

They were pleased, for they laughed with all their hearts; and there was no further doubt but their desultory applause was directed towards M. de B—. The Marquis, notwithstanding, appeared more delighted with their frolicsome transports than I had been proud of their homage. It was in spite of myself, but to the great contentment of my illustrious companion, that I was forced to follow the multitude to the very top of the line. There I succeeded, though not without great pains, to break a passage through the less crowded ranks of our admirers. There I bade adieu to M. de B—, who nevertheless followed me as close as his horse would carry him. Several other gentlemen kept galloping the same way; but it was not after him they were intently hunting this time, for they passed him without slackening their course. I, for a time, was in hopes of making my escape; but as, subsequent to long and useless windings, I was on the point of being overtaken, I thought it necessary to try more powerful means to disperse those troublesome pursuers.

I turned round to them; they were pages; I counted eight of them: Gentlemen, what can I do to oblige you?—Allow me to see and em-

brace you, I was answered immediately.—Gentlemen, you are very young, but yet you are of an age to act rationally; wherefore then, I beg of you, hazard against a man of honour a bad joke, which may be attended with dangerous consequences.—It is no joke, replied the youth who acted as spokesman: We would be extremely sorry to offer you the least offence; but indeed we long to embrace Mademoiselle du Portail.—No, interrupted a better-knowing one, not Mademoiselle du Portail, but the generous conqueror of the Marquis de B—.

Whilst they were speaking to me, I cast an inquisitive look over the country; I already could discern the famous Marquis, who was gaining ground, and trembled for my rendezvous: Gentlemen, I do not know Mademoiselle du Portail, but, let me tell you, I have no time to lose, therefore put an end to your fun; if it be absolutely indispensable that Faublas should be embraced by you all, I agree to it, with this proviso, however, that you will wait for, stop and detain, under some pretence or other, for a few minutes, that cavalier, whom you may perceive. You would even do me a great piece of service, if, for further security, you could

prevail upon him to ride back with you to Long-champs.

As I was still speaking, a man, rather shabbily dressed, and whom I had at first mistaken for one of these young men's servants, drew near to me in a mysterious air. I then, notwithstanding his flopped hat covered the upper part of his face, recognised M. Després, the dear doctor of Luxembourg. He spoke very low: Sir, said he, I am not come here to embrace you, but I have made all the haste I could to inform you, that Madame de Montdesir begs you to give her a call for one minute only.—Madame de Montdesir! oh, yes! I understand—tell her, my good friend, that I am very sorry, but that it will be two hours, at least, before I have it in my power to attend to her invitation.

The frolicsome pages collectively promised to stop, and to carry back with them the troublesome horseman, who now was but at a very short distance. They gave me their word, embraced me, and saw me, with regret, depart from them in full gallop.

It was high time I should arrive; Madame de Lignolle found the moments very long. As soon as she saw me, she loaded me with re-



proaches: How unjust you are, my dear! Is it my fault if that woman has the audacity— Yes, it is your fault. Why do you scrape an acquaintance with such creatures? Wherefore have you been unfaithful to me with that Madame de Montdesir?—What! are you going to revive a quarrel long since forgotten?—Forgotten! never! So long as I live, I shall remember having been silly enough to kiss the hand of that impertinent woman, who dares to avail herself—You have punished her for it, you have cut her face sadly.—I should have killed her.—She was very near being killed; her carriage was overturned; and she fell from a great height.—From a great height! exclaimed the Countess with great inquietude: Oh, my God! I perhaps, have hurt her dangerously?—No, but——

I then, with a view of soothing Madame de Lignolle, hastened to relate Justine's misadventure; and I leave you, to think how amused the Countess was with my rapid but faithful narration, who, however, felt keenly, whether she was pleased or angry. I really dreaded she would be choked with laughing.

I pressed her within my arms, thinking that

she was disposed for a reconciliation; but was very much mistaken; the cruel Eleanor repulsed her lover.—You will forever be the most ungrateful mortal upon earth, said she in an angry tone. I have been a whole age here, perishing with love and impatience. Yet it is to me that he leaves the care of inventing some scheme or other to procure a meeting.—It is in vain, my dearest, that I have planned several.—I succeed, at last, in finding a favourable expedient; I fly to that Longchamps which I detest; I hurry there to see Faublas, solely that I may see him. Thither he comes, indeed, but it is to procure an opportunity of paying his court to my two rivals.—Eleanor, I swear it was not so.—And what a barbarous trick! The cruel man arranges matters so, that I, whose heart is torn by jealousy, find myself placed exactly between my two mortal enemies.—What! do you pretend to say that was my fault?—Yes, try, you story-teller, try to persuade me that it was owing to chance alone that Madame de B—'s carriage stood precisely before mine.—Eleanor, I give you my word of honour.—Madame de B— was very right to go away; and so were you not to follow her! I had

just seen her! One moment later, I would have given you both a lesson that you would have remembered long enough.—My dear if I had gone there for her sake, would not I have followed her?

She, for a moment, seemed absorbed in deep thought, and immediately gave me a kiss; but on a sudden she cried out: No, no! I am not as yet convinced! It is because you were indispensably obliged to assist Madame de Mont-desir, that you kept me waiting here for upwards of half an hour!—No, my beloved; I have been kept a long time by that troublesome intruder.—Who was speaking to you so vehemently, and whom you listened to apparently with so much pleasure?—Pleasure! by no means.—What was that gentleman saying so remarkably fine?—He was speaking to me about my sister.—Does he know her?—To be sure; he is a relation.—A relation? This time, however, I believe you, because I have looked at him full in the face to ascertain whether he was not a female in disguise. Oh! you will never catch me again! I shall be on my guard.—*Apropos*, my dear, tell me, did not you see your aunt at Long-

champs?—No, I could see but you alone, whereas, sir, you paid great attention to all who surrounded you.—I have paid some attention to the Marchioness, because I thought she was looking at me.—Most luckily for us both she looks rather on the wane.—But, Eleanor, if she could have known me again?—I don't think she could!—Faublas, it would be a most unfortunate circumstance—yet—it is to be hoped she did not.

The Countess now spoke in a milder tone, and I soon convinced her of my being innocent. She then appeared to hear with transport my repeated protestations of love and fidelity; but I was no less grieved than surprised, when I saw her refuse my proving to her that my professions were sincere. No, no! would she say affirmatively—you weep, my good friend! what occasions you to shed tears?—You no longer love me as you did.—I love you more, sir.—You never refused me then.—No, to be sure, when you were in good health!—you weep!—Dear me, how childish!

My so rational mistress now bade me kneel before her, that she might wipe away my tears with her kisses.

Faublas, you must not weep, my man, it grieves me to see you—let me tell you, my beloved, I still remember the day when you fainted away in my arms; your illness since must have caused you much fatigue; you have not been long in a state of convalescence; do you wish to die? Indeed, if you should, I must die also—let me speak the truth, would it not be a great pity now? both of us so young and loving each other as we do! Ah! I beseech you, Faublas, let us die as late as we can, that we may adore one another as long as possible,—you laugh, sir!—am I to be laughed at when I speak rationally?—well now! you begin over again!—you consider all I say as nothing;—it is all the same to you?—Have done, Faublas, have done, my dear—leave me, sir,—go away. You will make me angry!—hark! listen to me—summon a little fortitude on your side.—Faublas! my dear Faublas, added she, after giving me the most tender kiss, it is no easy thing for me to resist mine own desires, if I must at the same time triumph over yours; I cannot answer to muster strength enough.

My adorable Eleanor was very right to mistrust herself, since after a few moments of vo-

luptuous struggling,—since subsequent to a short silence more voluptuous still, she said to me in a trembling voice, and through half stifled sighs; you are sensible of what has just taken place:—well! when I came here I had determined to allow nothing of the kind.—And she swore that at least it would not be repeated.

In the like manner as I have been publishing her defeat, I am bound in justice to publish her victory; notwithstanding my pressing efforts renewed at every minute, I never could obtain a second time from my scrupulous mistress to forget her chaste determination.

My charming friend! fortunate hours slide on very fast! It is already time we should part!—Already!—If I was to be too late, it would be impossible for me to patch up a probable story to tell M. de Belcour.—One moment longer, exclaimed she with tears in her eyes; one other moment! Faublas! we must part for three days.—For three days!—To-morrow I shall set off for Gatinois.—For Gatinois! without me! what to do there?—Alas! without you! It is your father—that father of yours, will be the death of me!—that festival, how dull it will be! when I was allowed to believe that my lover

was to embellish it by his presence, what a pleasing idea I formed of it! Eleanor, your tears occasion me too painful a sensation. Dry them up—wait—let my lips—tell me my sweet dear, what sort of a festival it is that you are talking of?—To stand in the midst of a thousand unfeeling people, and not meet the beloved object! to be surrounded by a crowd when you would wish to be in a desert!—Tell me about that festival?—Every year on Easter Sunday—every year since I was born—the Rosiere has received from my hands—last year I was still ignorant of what I was performing;—I know it now!—now I do know it. I flattered my weakness with the hope that my lover would be there to console me—to support me in case I should happen to think, with secret dread, that I who was crowning virtue, was no longer virtuous myself.—Alas! I shall not cease repeating it: it is not my fault; I shall say so forever: wherefore was I given away to that M. de Lignolle?—What I am now speaking hurts you, my Faublas!—but don't fret; I feel no remorse, not even regret—sometimes only—since your father has been holding out to me his long speeches—I surprise myself reflecting on the

numberless dangers—make yourself easy however, so long as you love me, don't be afraid of my forsaking you: and when you have ceased loving me—when you will love me no more, my despair will supply me with a last resource.—Be comforted—you weep!—come, my dear, come and give me a kiss,—come, let us mingle our tears—I shall set out to-morrow; on Sunday the sad festival will take place; on Monday, at a certain hour everybody will return. I shall bring back with me my aunt, and Madame de Fonrose who loves us dearly; Madame de Fonrose and I will concert some stratagem that will bring us together in the evening of that same Monday.

Although it was late already; notwithstanding the Marchioness was waiting for me, and that my father might be out of patience on account of my absence, I repeated my adieus a hundred times to Madame de Lignolle, before I could leave her.

At last, however, we mustered strength enough to part, and I ran to Justine's lodgings to meet Madame de B—.

The Marchioness's eyes were red, she breathed with great difficulty, she looked quite dejected;



she, nevertheless, saw me with some pleasure lay hold of her hand, which I immediately kissed twenty times over. Was it totally impossible, said she with infinite mildness, for you not to make me wait so long? And then, without giving me time to answer her, with apparent joy, and looking at me with an air of unbounded satisfaction, she added: here he is perfectly recovered. Who could imagine that twelve days back, this young man was dangerously ill? Would those ladies believe it, who just now at Longchamps wondered at his lily white and rosy complexion, who were not tired of admiring his beauty, the bloom of youth, his—Madame de B— appeared obliged to use violence not to say more. Her looks on a sudden turned sad, uncertain, and pensive. In a feeble and languishing voice she proceeded: I would not have ventured going if I had thought of meeting you there. But how could one have imagined that you were able to make your appearance in public, when little Montdesir had been waiting in vain a week for your apprising her of the day of your first visit.—Ah! don't accuse me! I had it not in my power to attend to your invitation. My father has followed

me everywhere; even this day he went to Longchamps with me.—Did not you see me there—at Longchamps? asked she with a kind of inquietude—I did, but would not bow to you for fear—She interrupted me with an exclamation of joy: I had presumed to flatter myself that he had known me, and that it was only from discretion—receive my best thanks: by that trait alone I could have known it was you whom I saw, the delicate friend of my choice.—Wherefore, dear mamma, did you stop for so short a time only at that promenade of which you were the chief ornament?—The chief!—no—no—I don't believe it—however, I only left it when I saw the crowd gathering round you.—So then you may have witnessed Justine's misadventure?—The Marchioness smiled. Yes, said she, I may have seen her accident! she next added in a very grave tone: has that accident punished her sufficiently? I shall be glad to hear you say in her presence, what is your opinion of the case, for which reason, if you are not tired of my company, we shall wait for her here.

We had not long to wait, for at that very moment the door of her ante-chamber was opened to her. A gallant cavalier was speaking to her

very loud: These young men accosted, and welcomed me on all sides; for my part I know not what it is to resist obliging manners, to the civilities of people that love me: in the meantime the other had a great advance over me. When I saw that I returned to Longchamps on purpose to meet you; I was struck with your physiognomy, child.—Am I not mistaken, said Madame de B—, is not this?—You are not mistaken. By his voice, and by his discourse I believe I know him again. It is him! it is him! let us be off!

There was not a moment to lose; we ran to the door which communicated with the jeweller's. My stars! exclaimed the Marchioness, what have I done with the key? A lofty, though narrow cupboard, yet most luckily deep enough, placed in a corner, close to the fireplace, offered us a safe asylum. Madame de B— got in first. Quick! Faublas! I had but just time to rush in and to close the door after us.

They entered the apartment that we had just left vacant for them.—Yes, continued he, I was struck with your physiognomy; I longed to speak to you.—So then you knew me again?—Directly! but how can you ask me such a ques-

tion, when I know all faces by rote?—Ah, but the superb caparisoned horses, the brilliant equipage, the rich dress I wore, might have made me look quite a stranger.—In the eyes of any other, but not in mine! You must have forgotten what a physiognomist I am. But now I think of your equipage, tell me, pray, who is the magnificent mortal who ruins himself to keep you? The Chevalier de Faublas, perhaps?—He! a perfect coxcomb!

Do you hear the impertinent hussy?—Hold your tongue, replied the Marchioness.—However, resumed M. de B—, methinks that you winked to him at Longchamps?—To him, to that raw boy? I was looking at you!—You don't dislike me then?—Who could?—You are right, for to speak the truth, I am bearer of a most engaging physiognomy; I meet with none but people who love me; you might have observed to-day at Longchamps, the universal joy which my presence created. Everyone seemed to feel satisfaction at seeing me.—No more than I did.—Yet, my poor little dear, a very disagreeable adventure has just befallen you. Who is the woman who treated you so ill?—A little strumpet!

But do you hear this?—Hold your tongue, said Madame de B— again. Her husband continued: Her servant wore a livery.—A borrowed, or hired one.—Your elegant phaeton is very much damaged.—I am sorry for it, and so much the more so as it is a present from a lady, a friend of mine.

At this part of the interesting dialogue, the Marchioness could not help repeating: A lady, a friend of mine! how insolent!—Was it you, then, my charming mamma?—It was!—Well, permit me in my turn to say: Keep silent.

We lost some of Justine's words, before we heard her say: To return from England on purpose!—A lady, a friend of yours, exclaimed the Marquis. Zounds! you must have shown great complaisance to that lady?—I warrant you I have,—I hope, however—she is a lady of fashion, a lady of high rank—who is kept close at home—I understand, I comprehend now! there is a stupid fellow of a husband, who has been made a dupe of—Or soon will be, Monsieur le Marquis.—Dear me, what blockheads some husbands are! so you let her come to your bedroom that—No, oh no! I am certain nothing dishonest has taken place between the two parties.

—Their intrigue has but just commenced then?

—Quite the contrary, it is done away with; for a time it was a story worth knowing.

—Tell me, then, do! I am always excessively pleased when I hear the recital of the tricks played upon those stupid husbands!—The lady formerly has been connected with the young man, but he left her for another, and she wishes to induce him to return to her.

Here the Marchioness muttered, what an impudent liar!—Oh! dear mamma, please to keep silent! and I ventured to give her a kiss which she could not help receiving. Meanwhile we had lost some other words.

So far, was Madame de Montdesir saying, she has not granted him the least favour, but the moment is near at hand when she will refuse him nothing.—You are acquainted with all her secrets, I find.—No, she is too mistrustful, and too artificeous, she scarcely tells me anything, but I can see from her conduct—— what do you laugh at?—At the countenance of those lovers, when they are together. I, who am a physiognomist, would willingly give a hundred louis d'ors to study at that time the expression depicted in their countenances! You ought to pro-

cure me that pleasure some day.—To you?—To me.—Impossible! M. le Marquis.—Why so? I would hide myself somewhere.—Impossible! I tell you.—Though I were to creep under your bed.—Under my bed! you could only see their legs then.—You are right. Let me see! in a cupboard.—You have cupboards here?—You see I have.

The conversation was taking a turn truly alarming; I was far from being at my ease, and I could feel the Marchioness to tremble.

Wait a moment! cried out the Marquis.

Most fortunately he went to that which was on the other side of the fire-place; and when he had looked into it: this, said he, is exactly what I want. A corpulent man could not get in, but I shall feel very comfortable. And, do you see, through the key-hole I shall peep at the actors quite at my ease. Come, Justine, let me prevail upon you—I will pay you liberally for your condescension, and will keep the secret to myself.—Upon my honour, if it were not totally impracticable, I would consent; for the novelty of the case alone—Is the lady handsome?—So, so, pretty well; but she thinks herself a beauty.—A customary thing. And the gallant?—Oh!

a charming young man! quite so!—Handsome than the Chevalier de Faublas?—Handsome? no, but quite as handsome, indeed—Do you know that I am jealous of the Chevalier?—How jealous? Do you still believe that the Marchioness?—No, by no means. But you, my angel—I! ah! you are wrong.—Formerly, though.—Formerly my inclinations were not solid. However, I always felt highly prepossessed in your favour, M. le Marquis.—I don't doubt it, I tell you my countenance produces that effect upon all the women.—It does; your wife, for one, adores you.—Adores me! you have spoken the right word. But do you know one thing? Nothing in the course of time becomes more tedious than those adorations. Madame de B— may be considered as a beautiful woman, be it so, but the same woman forever! Besides, notwithstanding all her tenderness, the Marchioness is of a cold constitution; and I only value that in amours. I am young and want amusement. I shall sup here with you, my dear.—Do you eat suppers?—Yes, I always sup, you must remember it—and I go to bed, my queen.—Where M. le Marquis? here?—No where else, this night, I assure you.



We heard a heavy purse to fall on the mantel-piece. Presently, said Justine, we shall move into the dining-room—Wherefore into the dining-room? Let us stay here; we are so comfortable! have our supper brought up here. Before, and even during our supper, we may have a thousand interesting things to communicate to one another.

Madame de Montdesir rang the bell; quick, said she, to the servant, who had come up, quick, lay two covers; no one to be admitted.

So, beautiful mamma, you and I are also going to sup and to bed in this cupboard.—Ah! my dear friend, answered she, I am not yet recovered from my fright.

Now that I have weighed the matter in my mind, I wonder why I dreaded spending the whole night in that cupboard, where I must find myself so well? I have already told you, that it was not wide enough to have held us; so then, since it was requisite the Marchioness and myself should occupy the depth, would it not have been very extraordinary, if I had impolitely turned my back on Madame de B—? I therefore had placed myself in the reverse direction. The consequence was, that in this

sweet posture, my lips would unceasingly meet hers, and that I could feel her heart to beat.

What man, though he were born in the frosty huts of Siberia; though clothed in a chastely absurd gown, he had been brought up in the hatred of love, and the dread of women;—though he had been fed constantly on vegetables destitute of juice;—though he had never been given any other liquor to drink but cooling emulsions;—what man, allured by the powerful attractions of so pressing a temptation as that which agitated me, would not have felt his heart to be moved, his spirits to ferment, and his whole blood to boil? Mine burned within my veins; and you yourself, O, Madame de B—, yourself—Ah! what virtue could have resisted.

My first caresses, however, occasioned her a surprise, mingled with terror. Faublas, is it possible! Think of what you are about! Sir! Sir!

The Marquis, more promptly successful in his amours than I was, forced me to suspend the vivacity of my enterprises. The prevailing silence which reigned in the apartment would have led me to a detection, if I had offered to stir: Methinks, my beauteous mamma, that your

husband is unfaithful?—What do I care! provided my friend retains some respect for me, provided he does not take the advantage of my truly chagrining situation, what do I care for the rest!

Their close conversation, the same as ours, was interrupted by the servant, who laid the cloth upon a table, which we heard to be brought close to our cupboard. As soon as the supper was served up, Madame de Montdesir said to M. de B—: Now that we are alone, M. le Marquis, let us have a little conversation together. I am glad to belong to you. It is a good fortune which I desired too ardently not to obtain it; but wherefore have I been obliged to wait so long for it? How came you not to pay any attention to me when I lived in your house?—What! under my wife's own roof?—That was not it! let me tell you, all you men are alike; be candid, you love me now because I am a something—You joke! did I not see in your physiognomy that you would be a something?—for you have a promising physiognomy——though a little spoiled this evening! That cut of a whip has marked you, but for a connoisseur that is a mere trifle; your features re-

tain their original character. Justine, I assure you that I have already read in your countenance that you were to make your fortune; I have said to myself a hundred times when looking at you: I observe in the look of that girl, I know not what that will please me at a future period.—Nevertheless, when six months ago you turned me out of doors!—I was angry. They wanted to make me believe that my wife—*Apropos*, I am very anxious to know in what manner you have discovered her being innocent of the charge, for innocent she was. Is it not so?—I am certain she was, and, remember, I always maintained it.—You have.—But I would wish to hear from your own mouth, how you have acquired the proofs!—Why, *Madame de B*— was compelled to supply me with all the information requisite. Listen to the narrative.

What the Marquis was going to say, must, in every respect, excite my lively curiosity; I therefore listened with redoubled attention.

In the first place, *M. du Portail* has no children, that is true. *Mademoiselle de Faublas*, who is a very giddy, presuming young lady, had taken his name, to go to a ball in male attire.

It is truly with Mademoiselle de Faublas, that the Marchioness got acquainted; and it is equally true, that it was Mademoiselle de Faublas who slept in my wife's bed. You, as you have at the time, repeated it to me a hundred times, know something about it.—Certainly! I undressed her!—Besides, it was shocking in me to suspect that the Marchioness could so suddenly throw herself at the head of a young man whom she did not know. But let me mention to you a circumstance that I have recollected since, and which I shall take great care never to inform Madame de B— of. My countenance produced upon the young person its ordinary effect: the lively damsel had just permitted me to pay her a visit in the night. I entered my wife's apartment; and in the dark, gently ran my hand over the bosom of the young girl—why by Jove, a male's bosom is of another make: You laugh!—Yes, I do laugh, because—because I think—that Madame—at that moment might have felt your hand—for she was in bed—Oh! she was fast asleep; and most unluckily I made a noise, which awoke her too soon.—Ah! ah! so that quite on the contrary, it was close to the child, who, perhaps, still con-

tinued asleep—She did sleep—It was close to her that you—kissed your wife.—Exactly so, my little queen. It was not to be presumed that I had come there for nothing; besides, it would have been offering a kind of insult to the Marchioness if I had gone away without fulfilling my conjugal duty.—I am very much astonished at madam permitting such a thing on that moment! You must confess that decency—The Marchioness that night was in a humour for it, because—

My dear love, I can bear witness that he tells a fib.—Faublas! pity me.

The jealous Marchioness, was M. de B— saying when I listened to him again: She is jealous, indeed, enough to frighten one!—Those are two substantial proofs, M. le Marquis, that it was Mademoiselle de Faublas!—But have you not some others besides?—Most assuredly: there was one which I had forgotten; it was Madame de B— who recalled it to my memory: on the day following, we saw the supposed Mademoiselle du Portail home; she was obliged to take us to her pretended father; but there we found her real father, who used her as a young lady whose conduct is not very regular

deserves to be treated. So that now I know that Baron de Faublas, I have had twice an opportunity of examining his disposition and his physiognomy; he is a hot-headed, passionate, and sometimes a brutal man, a man who is incapable of paying any regard. If it had been the young man whom he had brought home so disguised, he would have cried out as at the commissary's: He is my son!—So then it was Mademoiselle du Portail who came at night in the male attire, and the next day——The next day? No, it was her brother——Her brother, I know——But have you been told why?—Because M. de Rosambert insisted upon his playing that foul trick. M. de Rosambert had his reasons, he was in love with my wife, and enraged at meeting with repeated rebuffs, wished to be revenged. He accordingly dispatched to the Marchioness the Chevalier, dressed in his sister's clothes; and availing himself of the circumstance, came in the evening, abused my wife in a most shocking manner, using such language as might create strange suspicions against her! I do not remember the particular details of that scene; my memory is rather shallow, except when physiognomies——but the

Marchioness has assisted me, and I recollect that, in toto, the scene was dreadful.—This behaviour of Rosambert, I think, was infamous; never will I keep company with the Count again so long as I live, or if ever I meet him, if he were to speak a word to me, believe me, Justine, I would challenge him.—Do not attempt it! your lover would be frightened to death!—My lover! whom do you mean?—Me.—Well! very well spoken!—Pray inform me, likewise, M. le Marquis—I beg your pardon for asking you so many questions—you must be sensible that I am delighted at finding that you no longer suspect either your lady or me, for you imagined that I had been telling you a pack of idle tales. What became of Mademoiselle de Faublas?—Mademoiselle Faublas! she began by forming an intimate connection with M. de Rosambert, and, after that, with others. She had appointments with this one, and that one, I am very positive, I found a letter which she had left in a certain place; and I have met the young person herself in a tête-a-tête in the vicinity of the Bois de Boulogne. The result of all these intrigues was, what might be expected, a child.—A child! say you?—Yes, a child, I am sure of



that too; I saw her—in the family-way—round—getting plump—with the physiognomy of a woman who—am I not a true connoisseur? She then would hide herself under the name of Ducange, in the hotel of the Fauxbourg Saint Honoré. Notwithstanding these precautions, the father could not continue any longer ignorant of his daughter's loose conduct; and called a family meeting, the relatives, in order to secure the family from disgrace, came to a decision: the brother was appointed to show himself, from time to time, in public, in female attire, which would capacitate them to have it rumoured that it was the Chevalier de Faublas, and not his sister, who had frequented the ball-rooms in divers disguises. M. du Portail was so condescending as to agree to that arrangement. So that slanderers have been imposed upon and silenced, with the exception however of Rosambert and two or three other bucks, who will never be made to believe that the damsel was a male. But what is truly abominable in this affair, added he in a mysterious tone, is, that they have procured abortion! if not, it must have been in consequence of some accident that the young person was brought to bed be-

fore her time. I am certain, at least, that they have hastened to exhibit her in the public walks. The day on which I met her in the Tuilleries, she looked pale, thin, and emaciated. Consider, however, how many accidents combined on that day to bias my physiognomical knowledge. I find the young lady much altered; in a low voice, I congratulated her on her recovery; the father, who stood behind, heard me; exasperated at my being in the secret, he flew in a rage; the young man joined the group; and as it was the first time that I saw the brother by the side of the sister, was struck at their amazing likeness. The Chevalier called the Baron his father; the father cried out that M. du Portail had no children; M. du Portail told me the lie he had engaged to tell, and affirmed that it was the Chevalier who had always sported the cursed disguise. I then, bewildered by so many mistakes, and being very ticklish when my honour is at stake, flew into a passion, gave credit to their sayings in preference to my own eyes, accused my wife, and, what is still carrying matters further, I accused the physiognomical science and her of having deceived me. Madman-like, I challenged the Chevalier, who

has not been connected with the Marchioness, since he scarcely knew her; who was not, nor ever will be connected with her; neither he, nor any other. Nevertheless, the young man, interested in maintaining the contest, which had become a family business, entered into no kind of explanation. He accepted my challenge, and on the next day—

The Marquis went on speaking; but as I had heard all I wished to know, I ceased listening to him. A more pressing interest commanded a sweeter occupation. Madame de B—, in a posture unfavourable for an attack, and by no means convenient for the defence; apprehensive, besides, of being overheard, dared hardly stir, and to my rapidly multiplied efforts could oppose but a very short resistance. So that, indeed, when after a few minutes had expired, her delighted husband repeated: The Chevalier never has, never will; neither he nor others!—I was very near carrying my point. The Marchioness herself seemed conscious of my approaching victory, since she addressed me in the supplicating tone of a woman who only wished to retard her defeat: A moment! my dear friend, said she; I only beg of you to grant me one

single moment!—Faublas! I had imagined you were susceptible of showing me more generosity!—Heroism, my beauteous mamma, you should have said, would be wanted!—Cruel man! will you refuse me one moment? Faublas, my beloved, let me have time to ascertain whether I am not in extreme danger; you would not wish to expose me! Let me know whether, upon hearing the least noise, they cannot come and surprise us? Where are they?—At supper.—Make sure of it?—How can I?—Look.—Where through?—The keyhole.—That is no easy matter; there is not room to stoop.—Try. They are at table.—How do they sit?—Justine sits facing—The cupboard?—Yes.—And the Marquis?—Why he turns his back to us.

I had hardly done speaking, when the Marchioness, quick as lightning, disengaged herself from my arms, pushed our door open with violence, hurried out of the cupboard, rushed towards the table, which she overturned, and—I could see no more. The door of the cupboard had been closed again, the lights were extinguished; but, stupefied as I was, I could hear the report of half-a-dozen slaps of the face given by the Marchioness, who, in a firm tone of voice,

spoke as follows: It becomes you well, indeed, insignificant little creature, whom I have raised from the dust and poverty, who, had it not been for me, would still be tending the pigs in your native village, and whom I might, with a single word, send back again to your dunghill; it becomes you well to forget the respect you owe to your benefactress, and to make her private conduct the topic of your secret conversation. I especially find you very bold to presume to seduce my husband to your libertine association. —And you, sir; is it thus you repay my unbounded attachment? I had suspected that some projects of conquests brought you to Long-champs! I have had you followed, you have been seen—I have seen you myself go, without being put to the blush, to swell the shameful number of the followers of a courtesan, and in the crowd of her lovers, sue for the honour of obtaining the preference; you have been seen also conversing for a long time with a young man, to whom, if you had paid the least regard to me, you never should have spoken in public, nor even in private! You have been seen to return to console this nymph for the little accident which her impudence had been the occasion

of, and finally preparing to bring her back in triumph to her home.—Mademoiselle, whoever makes a trade of selling her person to the first comer, must expect to have no other servants but such as may be bribed by any new comer; I have had yours generously paid; they have not refused to let me know your direction, and one of them has concealed me in this room, where I trembled, sir, from fear of seeing you enter the place soon with your mistress. However, I was determined this once at any price to obtain a certain proof of your daily infidelities; I had even made up my mind to leave my place of confinement only to surprise in bed my unworthy rival and my perfidious husband.—I have not had patience enough to wait so long; besides you have spared me the trouble; neither do I wonder at it. This pretty lady is so deserving of your eager embraces! However, make yourself easy; I will be angry no more with either her or you; I already repent having been so violent against this girl. In future I shall know, upon similar occasions, how to retain more tranquillity; or, rather, this scene I promise you will be the last which the jealous Marchioness will ever indulge in; nay, to con-

tinue using your own very obliging expressions, my adorations will no longer fatigue you. At any rate, since at present I am informed that it was the mere desire of not insulting me that induced you to honour me sometimes with what you are pleased to call the conjugal duty, I need not repeat, through complaisance, what I have already told you with great moderation, that it was to me the most indifferent thing in the world. It is proper I should declare to you that I have truly immolated myself every time I have been compelled to discharge that duty, and that from this moment I think myself entirely dispensed from ever fulfilling it again. Little do I care for the weaker sex being interdicted, through a tyrannical custom, the sad and last resource against the offences of the strongest. I acknowledge no laws except those that are just; and no just laws but those which admit equality. It is too abominable to see the numerous acts of a husband's perfidiousness applauded, when the wife is disgraced for committing one single act of weakness. It is too shocking to think that I should have been condemned to perish broken-hearted in ignominious confinement, for idolising a lover the most de-

serving of my affections, and that I am bound to receive the embraces of an unworthy husband, on his leaving the arms of a prostitute! I swear it shall never take place. Remember, Marquis, the day on which false rumours and your odious suspicions accused me! Had I not justified myself right or wrong—right or wrong, repeated she, with great firmness, had I not justified myself, had I not convinced you of my innocence, you were going to exercise your right—the right of the strongest party. You already apprised me that our bonds were broken, that I was to be confined for life in a dreary prison. Well, sir, you pronounced on that day against yourself, for the offence you have been guilty of this day, not the sentence of your captivity, there are no convents for the reception of men in cases of this sort, but the sentence of our separation. You have just been signing that verdict, there on Justine's sofa. Madame de B— protests it will be so, and you must know that Madame de B—'s resolutions never vary. I shall live in celibacy, but I shall live free; I shall no longer be the property, the slave, the tool of anyone; I shall belong to myself alone. You, Monsieur le Marquis, more happy still



than before, will have, without any constraint, a hundred mistresses at a time, if you choose; all the women who will love you, and all the girls that may please you—this one excepted, however. I do not wish this one to be a gainer from your generosity, that is the only vengeance I will exercise. I shall only warn her that if she happens, were it but once, to receive you in her house, I will have her immured without mercy in a dungeon.—You think, Mademoiselle, I am doing you irreparable injury, don't you? —Be comforted, added she, in a tone that must have given Justine to comprehend the true meaning of those equivocal words; continue charming, clever, and faithful—other people, richer and more liberal, will indemnify you—with regard to wealth, for the loss of M. le Marquis. Others, believe me, will amply reward you for this indispensable sacrifice. I flatter myself, sir, that you will condescend to hand me downstairs, and return home with me.

Yes, I comprehend you, Madame la Marquise, cried out Justine, on her return from conducting as far as her ante-chamber, the Marquis and his lady, and thinking herself alone: I understand you! you will indemnify me for

this sacrifice; well and good! I shall be better off on that account, because then I may retain M. de Valbrun.

Whilst Madame de Montdesir was going on with her soliloquy, I continued in the cupboard; there I stood, wondering at all that had taken place, at all that I had just heard. Justine, meanwhile, burst out laughing: They are gone, said she, now let me enjoy it at liberty in full. What a good scene! when shall I see the Chevalier, to recount to him this—ah! what a remarkable good scene!—How the deuce could I have guessed that woman was here in this cupboard?

She opened it, and found me there.

What! this other too! great God! Oh! my stars! I shall burst—I thought it was a good scene! this will make it much pleasanter still! So then, M. le Chevalier, you were in the secret! You had matched us! the Marquis, however, only loved me through reprisals! In fact, since you were shut up in that cupboard for an hour, side by side, face to face! M. le Chevalier, you have!—you have not suffered to escape so propitious an opportunity of claiming your rights?—Justine, don't mention it: you see me still

amazed at her presence of mind, at her successful boldness! It was by a diabolical trick, a womanly cunning, that she deprived me, robbed me of a victory which I thought was certain!—I am sorry for it, it would have been more droll still. It is comical enough, however, as it is. I invited the husband to chat, just as if his wife had been at a thousand miles distance, as if I had guessed that you, M. de Faublas, were quite near. Do you know that I heard him tell some very excellent things! neither is what I have made him do, so much *amias*—there—almost under the eyes of his wife—a revenge from heaven! for it was also under the eyes of her husband, that the virtuous lady once idolised you, as she just now, most pleasantly, gave the Marquis to understand. Ah! she is a masterly woman! she has been making him dreadful declarations! He has been forced to hear harsh truths. Poor man! she did not allow him time to recover his proper senses. I wished you had witnessed as I did, what a figure he looked, with his eye-brows sticking up, his mouth gaping, and his eyes stupidly staring; I dare say he will not be able to utter a single word before he reaches his home.—What occasions me a lively pleasure,

added Madame de Montdesir, weighing in each hand a purse full of gold, is that I shall get rich if this should continue: the husband pays to caress, and the wife to beat me.—How so?—Yes, that one I earned on my sofa, this the Marchioness just now, while the lights were out, very dexterously gave me with one hand, while with the other, she gave me a few little slaps on the face, which occasioned me more fright than they did me hurt.—M. le Chevalier, if your Countess would at least pay for the blows she strikes.—Justine, never speak to me of the Countess, and rather try, if you wish we should continue friends.—I will do everything in my power to gain that end, interrupted she, jumping to embrace me. Come! do you want proofs of my sincerity? Stop here; in fact I was not intended to sleep alone to-night, and without pretending to pay you any compliment, I shall think myself a great gainer by the change.—Justine, I believe they are now far enough, and that I may go down without danger—Good night.—What! are you in earnest! what has become of your love for me?—That love, my pretty, has been gone several days since!—Ah! then try to call it back one of these mornings,

said she, negligently looking at herself in a glass over the chimney-piece, and if it should return, you may return with it, and will always be welcome.—But before you go, at least eat a morsel—A morsel? true, indeed, I am half starved!—but no, it is getting late; my father must be uneasy: adieu, Madame de Montdesir.

As soon as I appeared at the door of the hotel, the Swiss called out: Here he comes! Here he is, halloed Jasmin on the stair-case. Is he not wounded? asked the Baron, who ran to meet me.—No, father; so then you saw me in the crowd with the Marquis de B—?—Yes, I did see you; in vain did I attempt to force my passage through the throng to join you; I have been returned home these three hours, and nothing could equal my inquietude. What has happened to you? how has your antagonist detained you so long?—I shall tell you: when we were able to withdraw from the *branhahas* of the multitude, we were both very warm—Have you killed him?—No, father, but he has forced me—Another dreadful affair! another duel!—Not at all, father, you won't let me finish: he forced me to follow him as far as Saint Cloud, to a friend's he has there, and who gave

us refreshments—Refreshments!—Yes, father; M. de B— is sorry he has quarrelled with me; he cannot be comforted for having done so without a cause; he has begged my pardon twenty times; he loves me, he honours you, and has desired me to assure you of his sincere esteem.

Upon hearing those last words, my father endeavoured to retain his gravity; but unable to succeed, he turned his back to me. Madame de Fonrose, who had not the same reasons to use constraint, laughed most heartily. She winked at me, to give me to comprehend where I had taken refreshments. The Baroness took her leave of us when her laughing fit was over. I leave you before it gets late, said she, because I must get up very early to-morrow, to go to the castle of the little Countess.

I can't tell whether Madame de Fonrose was more early than Madame de B—, but I was called up before seven to receive a note from Justine.

“MONSIEUR LE CHEVALIER.—M. the Viscomte de Florville is now with me; and dictates what I am writing. He is very sorry he was

prevented, by more pressing business, telling me yesterday, in your presence, what he thinks of my behaviour towards the Countess. A girl, situated as I am, must have lost the use of her senses, to have been so audacious as to insult in public a lady of her rank. My nonsensical imprudence might also have exposed M. de Florville, for, had you not known him so well, you, M. le Chevalier, might have suspected him of having had his share in my odious proceeding. Nevertheless, M. le Vicomte has forgiven me; but he questions your being disposed to show me the like indulgence; and he apprises me, that if you refuse pardoning me, neither the patronage of M. de Valbrun, nor other more powerful considerations, will prevent my going to-night to sleep at——M. de Florville kindly condescends to spare me the humiliation of writing the word omitted.

“I remain, with repentance, fear, and respect, etc.

“MONTDESIR.”

“Present my respectful homage to M. le Vicomte, assure him, my poor child, of all my gratitude; but tell him that he is uneasy in his

mind without a cause; that I never could have taken it into my head that he were capable of using such means as those that were adopted yesterday, and by a woman of your description, to chagrin Madame la Comtesse. Do not fail adding, that I forgive you on account of the threefold consideration of the cut from a whip, of your fall, and of the slaps you received yesterday. So much said, fare thee well, my dear!"

Meanwhile, in the midst of the most extraordinary events which seemed to follow each other so close, purposely to be conducive to my speedy convalescence, by not allowing me to think of my actual situation, I enjoyed a moment of repose, which I consecrated entirely to my Sophia. Oh, my Sophia! Oh, my wife! no less cherished, and evermore regretted, when wilt thou come, by thy presence, to diminish and to annul the lively impressions which the tenderness and charms of thy rivals produce on the mind and heart of your still young husband, too weak to resist so many trials? But what have I been saying?—of thy rivals? Sophia, in truth, thou hast one only!—that one, I can-



not do otherwise: I must adore—and at least—at least, I will most certainly love alone!

But what can mortal man oppose to destiny? My persecuting genius, at the very moment when I was forming the wisest resolutions, was preparing to impose upon me, as a law, several new infidelities, for the perpetration of which it will be seen I am not, without the greatest degree of injustice, to be found guilty of.

Madame de Fonrose, whom I thought was already at a great distance, came at twelve o'clock, to inform us that a slight indisposition having kept her in town, she was come to dine with us; and it was immediately agreed, that as soon as our dinner was over, we should go to the Tuilleries. I declined joining the party.

Before we sat down to table, Madame de Fonrose, whom my father left alone with me for a few moments, said to me: You were right to refuse going with us; leap for joy, you will see Madame de Lignolle this evening.—Is it possible?—Listen to me, and thank your friend. As I was sitting at my dressing-table this morning, a humorous idea occurred to my mind: I ran to impart it to the Countess; but ever too

hasty, she was already gone. I then applied to the old aunt! I told Madame d'Armincours, that Mademoiselle de Brumont having but a moment obtained the unexpected leave of going to Gatinois, had dispatched me to request of Madame la Marquise to postpone her departure for a few hours, and to give her a seat in her carriage.—In hers! and why not in yours?—A fine question! because I sacrifice myself, in order that you may go, I must not. When the concert is over, I shall take the Baron home with me; and, that I may keep him there, I shall use means which I leave you to guess, young man! The Baron will oppose so much the less resistance, as knowing that Madame de Lignolle is absent, he cannot plead the danger of leaving you master of your own actions. M. de Belcour will stop, I promise you; I even engage to keep him with me to-morrow, the whole of the day. I shall manage matters so, that he will not go home before midnight; try you to return by nine, that you can. Immediately after dinner, which I have had got ready at an early hour, your father and I will be off. Agatha then will come and dress you. That done, pop into a hackney-coach, and drive in great haste to Ma-

dame d'Armincours—don't lose her direction—and fear nothing.

It will be six, perhaps, when you set off; but you will be time enough yet to spend a good night with the Countess. In the morning, you will assist at the festival, seated by the side of Madame de Lignolle, who most likely will be rather inclined to take a nap than to receive company. But there is no pleasure to be procured without some drawback: methinks I see her little face turned pale and fatigued, which will appear to you more interesting in consequence. However, have a little patience! you also will have your punishment to endure, for a lover like Faublas has always a good appetite. Notwithstanding, sir, you must quit the grand dinner! I am very sorry for it! at two o'clock precisely step into your post-chaise—do not fail, Chevalier!—do not yield to the solicitations of your giddy mistress, to expose her, disoblige me, and deprive yourself forever of the resources which such a friend as I am has in reserve for you—a friend——

My father returning, the Baroness was compelled to change her conversation. At first, everything passed as smooth as Madame de Fon-

rose had foretold. Before five o'clock, Faublas was disguised: at five precisely, Mademoiselle de Brumont scarcely applied the tip of her lips to the pointed chin of the old Marchioness, who returned the pretended kiss with a truly chagrining tardiness, and casting upon her a look which a tender curiosity seemed to animate. To make amends, Mademoiselle de Brumont gave a free embrace to a certain tall, slender, well-made girl, who exhibited on her youthful countenance the brilliant hue of nature and pudicity.—Madame la Marquise, this is a very pretty young lady!—She is Mademoiselle de Mésanges a cousin to your friend. I have just fetched her from her convent to take her to the festival. *Apropos* of festival—you were not at Long-champs yesterday then with the Countess?—No, madam. I am really delighted at miss joining our party!—I saw somebody there that looked very much like you, resumed the tiresome gossip.—Where, madam?—At Long-champs.—That may be.—She is truly a sweet creature! It is high time that she should get married!—We are thinking of getting a husband for her, replied the dowager.—And you, mademoiselle? asked I.—I, returned the in-

nocent girl, and casting down her eyes, and crossing, with an embarrassed air, her hands, lower than her bosom: Me! why! that is no business of mine; I have been told, however, that I should be informed; and I have begged to hear of it when it was time.—Yes, yes, exclaimed the Marchioness, we will let you know. Mademoiselle de Brumont here will speak to you—my old girl, you will speak to her, won't you? I do not wish she should meet with such a misfortune as has befallen my poor niece; it might so happen; indeed, she is totally ignorant, added she quite low, she knows of nothing! I entrust you with the care of instructing her.—With a deal of pleasure.—Not yet, however, but when the time is come, I beseech you to employ your whole abilities.—Madame la Marquise, you may rely upon me.—Yes, I doubt not but I shall always find you disposed to render me services of the kind. I assuredly do not know of a girl more obliging than you are.

We departed, and as we were stepping into the carriage, I could not help making this observation, namely, that Mademoiselle de Mésanges had a pretty leg, and a very small foot.

As we were on the road, I had many an opportunity also of discovering, through a thin gauze, something very pretty. Neither could I abstain thinking, within myself, that he must be a fortunate mortal who was intended first to see that rising breast to palpitate with pleasure. It was with a deep mortification, however, that I soon made another discovery. I could read on the countenance of the young person, I know not what, less attractive than natural pleasing modesty, more senseless than plain ingenuity, a certain, I know not what, which seemed to apprise me, that love, so quick in general in enlightening the mind of a young girl, would be at great pains to inoculate a little wit into this one's.

However, whether through instinct or sympathy, Mademoiselle de Mésanges seemed already to be very partial to me, when we arrived at the castle. Everybody was asleep, one waiting woman alone sat up to wait for the Marchioness. The Countess had taken care to keep her own apartment for her dearest relatives: her aunt was to occupy her bed; she had ordered another to be put up for her young cousin, in the adjacent closet; that closet with a glass door,

whither the reader will recollect that I have promised to bring him back more than once. With regard to Mademoiselle de Brumont, as she was not expected, there was no room kept for her in the whole castle, not one bed but what was occupied. Every year, at the period of this festival, generally brilliant, the Marchioness was in the habit of receiving her whole family; and this once, as will often happen in the country, some friends with them. The first word I spoke was to have the Countess called up. The old Marchioness was nearly falling in a passion; it was not becoming, said she, to have the rest of her child disturbed, young folks might sleep together, and not die in consequence of a bad night! The young damsel looked at me with a frown: I was a naughty girl to wish to have her cousin called up: would it not be more amusing to chatter together all night, than to go and sleep separately in a bed?

Oh, my Eleanor! I give you my word of honour that notwithstanding the bad night with which the aunt threatened me, notwithstanding the interesting conversation that your cousin promised to treat me with, I insisted upon going

to you ; but the Marchioness then, quite in an ill-humour, absolutely forbade the waiting-woman showing me your apartment, and immediately gave her the tremendous order to undress us all three. Could I, tell me, go through the numerous galleries of the immense castle in search, from door to door, of the mistress, and awaken the whole company at two in the morning ? Observe, besides, that the very expeditious maid already stripped your old aunt of all her wearing apparel, and could not be long in coming to me. Under what pretence, however, could I refuse her very dangerous services ? Confess, my Eleanor, confess with a good grace, that I was obliged immediately to yield consent.

I hastened to undress myself, ran to the closet ; and had already placed my foot in the very little bed in which the Demoiselles de Mésanges and de Brumont would certainly have found it difficult to procure room enough for them both for a whole night.

But, oh, heavens ! what a thunderbolt comes to crush me ? the cursed old woman has altered her mind ! most likely recollecting the talent I am possessed of in explaining everything, she



has apprehended lest I should make a premature use of it with her Agnes. No, though, cried she to me, in a hoarse voice, upon second thoughts, it is with me you will come to bed.

Everyone may guess how I objected to the proposal; but it is proper I should conceal from no one that the young miss was no less hurt at this proposition than myself! What, my kind cousin, for fear we should be a little incommoded, would you expose yourself to spend a bad night?—Do not be afraid of that, *Mé-sanges*; you know that I sleep very sound; nothing prevents my enjoying a good night's rest.—How! *Madame la Marchioness*, would you show me such excessive kindness as to allow me to incommode you?—Not in the least, my angel, you will not incommode me at all; I observe that this bed is very large; you will see, we shall be very comfortable!—That is exactly what I did not wish to ascertain. I attempted to repeat my caressing solicitations; but a positive “I insist upon it” closed my mouth.

Now, quicker still and more cruelly than before, I was forced to immolate myself—I was in my shift! If, however, you do not perceive

at first sight, what I found very troublesome; if I am obliged to describe in its whole extent the state of extreme embarrassment in which I stood, how shall I manage not to violate in some degree austere modesty. You, readers, who are in want of penetration, show me at least some indulgence. Who among you, standing in my place, could have acted better than I did? I was obliged, as I had so many eyes upon me, to make the best of it; I was at a loss in what way to screen myself, but that presence of mind which had been called into action on so many occasions, now enabled me to cover with my hands all that was necessary to be concealed, without being confused. Mademoiselle de Brumont, in order to screen Faublas from all eyes, was therefore reduced to make the best of a bad bargain, to obey promptly; she was compelled, without any further deliberation, to leave the narrow couch of a novice maiden, to hurry into the wide bed, in which soon after a dame of about sixty years of age came to stretch herself down by the side of her.

Ah! pity Faublas, pity him! never was he placed in a more chagrining situation. Yes, in this same bed, a fortnight back, I suffered less,

when, undeserving of the affection of two lovers, I felt, under the eyes of the Countess and of the Marchioness, near dying from extreme weakness; whereas on the present day it is my recruited health that causes my apprehensions, and makes me miserable! How then! can a sexagenarian, by the only reason that she is a female, kindle within my breast those devouring fires?—But is it not rather because through a too thin partition, the nubile attractions of that child cause me still to feel their burning influence?

Draw nearer, my darling, draw close to me, would my bed fellow say tenderly.—No, Madame la Marchioness, no, it would disturb your sleep.—You will never disturb me, my dear soul, I never feel too warm in bed.—Well! heat incommodes me.—Why, that I believe is very possible! at your time of life I was the same.—I don't doubt it. I have the honour to wish you a good night, Madame la Marchioness.—I was like you, and when M. d'Armincours was pleased to sleep by himself, he did me service.—Very well! Madame la Marchioness, I wish you good night.—He rendered me a service truly when he would leave me—after having

fulfilled his duty, that is understood—and I must do him justice, while he was young he complied easily to perform it. Oh! he was no M. de Lignolle!—I wish you joy upon the occasion.—I believe, Madame la Marchioness, it is getting late.—Not too late—come nearer, my pretty—I can't hear what you say,—what! do you turn your back to me?—I do, because—because I can only sleep on my left side.—The side of the heart! that is singular! it must check the circulation.—To be sure it does, but habit—Habit, my sweetly, you are right! now me for instance, since I was married—that is a long time ago.—I don't doubt it.—I have got into the habit of always laying so—as I do now—and never could break myself of it.—Perhaps that is so much the better for you, for the posture is not a bad one. Madame la Marquise, I have the honour to wish you a good night.—You are very sleepy then?—I warrant you I am.—Well then, my little heart.—Please yourself, there is plenty of room—but where is she gone? Quite on the edge of the bed!

She made a great motion: if my hand had not stopped hers, my stars! what would have been the consequence?

Ah! madam, pray don't touch me, you would make me jump to the skies.—But, my chicken, don't get out of bed; I only wanted to feel where you were—come in again—take care—you must be very ticklish, my little dear?—Prodigiously so! good night, madam.—So am I too. I don't know whether that is another habit! what do you think of it?—I don't believe it is.—But, my dear, take care, you will fall.—No.—Whence proceeds this obstinacy? wherefore not come near me? There is more room than is wanted.—'Tis because I—I can't touch anything! If I were only to feel accidentally the tip of your finger—I should faint away.—Zooks! that is a bad disorder. What will you do, then, when you get married?—I will not marry. I have the honour to wish you a good night, Madame la Marchioness.—How could you have laid in that horse bedstead, by the side of young Mésanges?—You are right; I could not have laid quiet, Madame la Marquise; I wish you a good night.—What o'clock may it be?—I don't know, Madame; but I wish you a good night.

At length the gossip became willing to let me hear, in my turn, that “good night” so press-

ingly solicited; but rejoice, Faublas, rejoice, thou wast not the only one who sighed for it.

As soon as the Marchioness had begun to snore, for there was that agreeable additional charm in the company of my charming bed companion, that she was heard to snore like a man, methought, that in a low voice I was addressed in the following words: My dear friend! I fancied it was a sport of my imagination; yet I lifted up my head, and watched for the least noise: a second time "my dear friend" a moment after saluted mine ears.—My dear friend, tell me yourself, what is the matter?—Can you sleep?—No, indeed, I cannot.—Nor I, neither, my dear; whence comes that?—Whence?—because, my dear, as you were saying not long since, it would be more amusing to have a little chat together.—If you think so, come then.—With all my heart, but the Marchioness?—My cousin?—Ah! when she snores it is a sign that she is asleep.—I believe you.—And she sleeps in good earnest when she is asleep. Come my dear; come, then, you have nothing to fear.—Ah! as I have told you, with all my heart, my dear, but your door is locked!—Certainly! my door is always locked, without that precaution

I should be afraid.—How, then, would you have me get in?—Why! it was not me who locked the door.—I do not say it was you.—It was not me, because I have not perceived at all that I was frightened at you, my dear.—You are very kind, my dearest; but here I am, standing at your door, and rather thinly clad to hold a conversation.—Ah! but it is the Marchioness who has locked me in.—That does not prevent my beginning to feel cold.—Ah! but the Marchioness has put the key in her pocket.—Why, but I have not got her pocket.—My dear, you can find it in the dark.—In the dark, dear; well, I will feel for it.—Do, my beloved; nearly at the foot of the bed, on the second arm-chair, on the left hand side; I have seen her place her pockets there.—Why, my dear, did you not tell me so before?

Without making the least noise, I found the arm-chair, the pocket, the key, and the key-hole. I found my dear friend, who received me into her bed to chat; my good friend who, to warm me, threw herself into my arms, and pressed me to her bosom. What a sweet child!

You, Goddess of my history! and of all the histories in the world, you who have conde-

scended to take up my pen when I was necessitated to relate, in a decent style, the ticklish debates between the aunt and niece, the delicate multiplied questions the amorous instructions lavished upon the latter, O Clio! worthy Clio, come! come this day to describe the astonishment of the cousin, her first inquietudes, and her sweet errors! come to recount something else! come! the recital which I have further to make is, perhaps, more surprising, and more difficult than any of those I could not hitherto dispense gratifying public curiosity with.

For some minutes past we had been conversing most amicably, and I began to get warm again; a short time only elapsed when our conversation was interrupted by Mademoiselle de Mésanges, who made a start backward.—What are you frightened at, my beloved?—Why, but both your hands are here on my neck, and yet I have felt—I felt something that seemed very strange to me!—Do you wonder at that? It is because—I am fit to be married.—My dearest dear, what shall I say to you?—You have not hitherto been informed, because you are still too young.—Ah! since it must be so, replied my novice, the Marchioness will have no occasion to



inform me ; so great a change will not take place without my being sensible of it.—Yes, I laugh, I think they are playing their tricks upon my good friend *Des Rieux*.—A good friend of your convent?—Yes.—With whom you go and chat in the night?—When they forget locking me up.—They are playing tricks with that young lady?—Certainly! they tell her every day that she is properly formed; I plainly see that is not true, and that it is because they expect something that they unceasingly postpone her marriage under divers pretences.—Probably. How old is she?—Sixteen.—Oh! too young still.—But I am almost eighteen.—And it is a long time since you have been fit to be married?—A twelve month—or nearly so.—I suppose you do not tell anyone that you converse at night with that young miss?—I am not such a simpleton; they would soon deprive one of the means of doing so again.—You, therefore, will beware of telling them that I came to have a little chat with you this night?—Don't be afraid—*apropos*, there is a something that puzzles both *Des Rieux* and me vastly; you, certainly, my dear, will tell us what a man is?—A man! I would give anything in the world,

my dearest, to know.—Would you? well! enter the same agreement as *Des Rieux* and I have.—What is it?—The first of us two who gets married, is to come the next day to tell the other all about it.—Trust me, I join in the convention!—My good friend, you embrace me much in a like manner to what *Des Rieux* does, and I don't know, but it seems to me as if it occasioned me more pleasure still.—That proceeds, most likely, from my loving you better than she does.—My dearest dear!—What is the matter?

What did she wish to do with my hand, which she seized on a sudden, saying: Embrace me then, my dear beloved, as *Des Rieux* does!—Not quite in the same manner, my dear! but in a little better one, perhaps!

Although I did not cease protesting that all would soon be over, that the most difficult part of the business was already gone through, the young person, subsequent to her uttering some gentle screams, which she endeavoured to stifle, could not finally suppress a piercing shriek. I shall not tell what occasioned her pain; but I think I have mentioned above, that *Made-moiselle de Mésanges* had a very little foot.

Was it not a very cruel thing for me to be

obliged to leave the field of battle precisely at the moment when victory was declaring in my favour? I however, was forced so to do. The Marchioness, roused on a sudden from her first sleep, was muttering these words. Mercy upon me! oh, my God! it is a dream!—ah, it is only a dream!

I immediately submitted to necessity, quitted the bed of the ex-maiden, and escaped, on my knees and hands, to that of the dowager.

Now this latter, who was quite awake, was anxious to know the cause of the noise she had just heard.—Alas! it is me, madam.—You! miss? where are you then?—On the ground by the bedside; I have just fallen down.—Why will you obstinately lay on the very brim?—Quite on the contrary, madam.—How so, on the contrary?—I approached too near.—And what then?—What then! When madame sleeps, she cannot help jogging about; madame has stretched out her leg; her leg has touched me—I did not do it on purpose, my dear child; get into bed again; keep at some distance, if you like.—Oh, yes, I do!—You awoke me on a sudden.—Pray, madam, do not scold me, I am extremely sorry if I have—I do not

scold; there is no great harm done: we shall have a little chat for a moment.—I beg you will excuse me, I feel quite ill already for having had so little sleep.—Listen at least to what I was dreaming.—Good night, madam.—Ah, I wish to recount my dream.—But then, madam, you will not be able to go to sleep again.—Oh, but I will though; I can sleep whenever I please. Where, in the name of patience, do we collect matter for all our dreams! This was the place of action. I dreamt that an impertinent man was espousing me by main force.—Ah! ah! Madame la Marquise! what man would be so audacious?—Guess.—It was not me, at any rate.—No, it could not be you; but most likely it was your brother.—I have no brother.—I do not say you have, my darling; people will dream every day of what does not exist. In my dream, he was your brother, for he bore a striking likeness to you.—Pardon this new wrong of mine.—You joke, my angel! it was not your fault; besides, there is no harm in it; but that is not all.—What! the impudent fellow! perhaps he had courage to begin over again?—Not so; he soon left me to go into that closet.—That closet?—Without my leave—do you hear?—Without

your leave!—To marry young De Mésanges.—Young De Mésanges!—Who did not oppose him——Who did not oppose him!—Wait a little; what is most singular, the child, not being so well drilled as myself to that exercise——What then?—Pain—Pain!—Caused her to send forth a shriek——A shriek!—That awoke me.

Figure to yourself, reader, if you can, the mortal fright that agitated me. Had the Marchioness really dreamt that dream, which accorded so well with the circumstances? Was it a tardy warning, that Hymen, a sworn enemy to all amorous successes, had just sent to the too careless duenna, in order to prevent my triumph being completed? Or, what would have been worse still, had the cursed old woman, at that very instant, with a wonderful presence of mind, invented that supposed dream, on purpose to give me clearly to understand that my crime had been discovered, that an entire devotedness alone could expiate it, that I must instantly meet the punishment which awaited me in her arms?

At this last idea, all my senses at once revolted. I, notwithstanding, summoned all my

fortitude, in order to ascertain, by means of some indirect questions, the true disposition of Madame d'Armincour.

Are you serious, madam?—Quite serious, my beauty.—What! you heard, madam——To be sure, I did hear.—You have been telling me also that you had seen! How could you see, being in the dark?—Ah! in my dream it was broad daylight.

This answer, made in a tone of great candour, restored me to perfect tranquillity. Good night! Madame la Marquise.—Well, child, since you will absolutely have it so, good night! My companion now went to sleep again; and her loud snoring, which before was so disagreeable, now caressed my ears as sweetly as might have done the most enchanting voice, the voice of Baletti. Do not wonder at it; it was the joyful trumpet which announced the time was come for me to go and resume a charming piece of work, already in a state of great forwardness, but unfortunately interrupted as nearly completed. Eager to finish it, I lifted up the clothes with the utmost precaution, and I was ready to step out of the bed, when, on a sudden, the propitious snoring ceased. A wrinkled,

heavy hand, which appeared to me to be that of Proserpina, caught hold of me by the neck, and stopped me for awhile: Wait a moment! said the infernal old woman, at last; I am going with you.

She was going, indeed—to shut the door; and she locked it; after calling out to young de Mé-sanges: Sleep, mademoiselle, sleep! and have a little patience, we will marry you ere long!—Ah! but, Madame la Marquise, replied my dear friend, in a languishing tone of voice, I am not fit to be married yet!—Very well, resumed the other, counterfeiting her accent; very well, miss prudely! You seem to know nothing about the matter, but that will not prevent our doing your business for you, as soon as possible, too.—Come along, miss, you who have contracted habits, added she, conducting me by the hand to her bed; I shall see whether you can keep awake to chat with young girls only.

At these dreadful words, which forebode tortures awaiting me, I could feel a deadly shivering to freeze my blood, my whole blood, which, from all the extremities, flowed with prodigious swiftness towards my heart. Trembling through every limb, I suffered myself to be dragged to-

wards the place of execution. I fell on the bed, where a fury was already waiting to press me within her avenging arms. There I fell, exhausted, motionless, and almost lifeless.

The impatient Marchioness, subsequent to a short silence, asked me, in a hoarse, broken voice, which she strove to soften, whether I had forgotten her dream, and if I thought of realising one point of it only?

Alas! I was thinking of her dream! I thought it appeared indispensable I should prevent greater misfortunes by a generous devotedness. Was I, by offering to Madame d'Armincour an insult that no female will ever forgive, to expose to her easy vengeance Mademoiselle de Mésanges, who had nearly been caught in the fact, and my dear Madame de Lignolle also? Was I to risk exposing myself to the rancour of three families, that would unite against me? A magnanimous effort, therefore, was the only means I had left of saving my two mistresses and myself.

Never more than upon this occasion did I ever experience that a resolute young man, whose great courage besides is called forth by pressing necessity, may at all times rely upon



himself. After some short hesitation, after a few moments of dejection and terror, inseparable from the dreadful undertaking I was summoned to, I felt less incapable of attempting, and perhaps of accomplishing it. Unfortunate youth! your last hour is near at hand! Come, Faublas, come, show a good heart! immolate thyself! Thus did I encourage my still wavering virtue, but, to consolidate it, I wanted to make some new efforts. The victim, at last, however, wishing for nothing more but to avoid, at least, cruel preludes, and to accomplish the dolorous sacrifice in an instant, if possible, the resigned victim on a sudden flew to meet his fate.

How prompt! exclaimed the malignant old woman, laughing. Gently, sir, gently, if you please! it was said in my dream that you married me by force. By force! do you hear? Let me ask you then, are you disposed to use violence; Are you fully determined to ravish the dowager d'Armincours?—No, madam, I have too much honour to commit so heinous an offence.—Well, then, be quiet by my side. I may have played you a trick; at any time of life one likes a joke, for my part I always

do, when my Eleanor is not concerned; but it would be carrying the joke too far, if I were to accept of your generous offer. Keep yourself for young women; if the aunt was to take you at your word, the niece might not be satisfied.—The niece! you think that Madame de Lignolle——Most assuredly I do; but let me have nothing to say about the Countess for the present; we have a more pressing object to speak of. You were speaking just now, sir, of a heinous action! Are you not sensible that the one you have indulged during my sleep was horrible?—Madam, could anyone, had he been in my place—Wherefore were you in that place, in which you never should have been? Why go in search of temptations that no one could resist? Wherefore surprise the confidence of relations by a perfidious disguise? I see nothing, sir, that you can plead as an excuse, but I hope, at least, you have some means of repairing the injury that Mademoiselle de Mésanges and her family have suffered.—Madam.—You will undoubtedly marry the young person.—Madam.—Speak plain: will you, or not?—With all my heart, as I have said before; but—Let me hear the meaning of your but.—I cannot.—You are already

married, are you not?—I am, madam.—That's it! that becomes certain!—What is become certain, madam?—Make yourself easy, sir, I was speaking to myself. You may see now it is a dreadful thing to—seduce young persons that you have it not in your power to marry; for she has been seduced, has not she? You have done her a great injury?—Madam.—Speak, sir. What is done, is done; there is no remedy; but you will have the goodness to inform me, in what situation exactly you have left the young person; in all probability I awoke too late for her safety; but, to speak the truth, since I entertained suspicions, I ought not to have gone to sleep at all. Yet how could I have fancied that, though inclined to commit a rash act, they would have the audacity and time requisite, when I, who must be very easy on my own account, held the rake in my bed, the young girl locked in, and the key in my pocket? He must be a true devil! a mad devil, too, I say. Well, sir, confess it—the young girl has—the young girl—the young person is—the young person has undergone an entire metamorphose?—To conceal nothing from you, madam, I believe that my triumph has been complete.—A fine

triumph! very difficult to obtain, indeed!—very difficult for the sweet child.—What now! in his enthusiasm, he wants to enter into particular details.—Ah! pardon me, madam, whether difficult or not, I have known your cousin so little, that I cannot imagine any serious consequences will ensue.—What do you mean? explain.—I mean that it is hardly to be presumed that she is pregnant.—Why, indeed, cried she, in a passion, what a high favour you are bestowing upon us! but at any rate, sir, her fame is gone to the devil! Do you reckon that a mere nothing? Would you have been pleased if you had been given in marriage a young person already learned?—Learned! She is not so.—What is he now telling me?—She is so little informed that she believes I am a girl.—But do you believe that I was born yesterday, to come up to me with such an idle story?—Madame la Marchioness don't be angry. I'll tell you the whole story.

The good aunt, who did not hear me without interrupting me by frequent exclamations, cried out, as soon as I had nothing more to say: That is very extraordinary, and there is not quite so much harm done,—not quite so much.

Sir, I expect you will keep it a profound secret—and I rely enough upon your honour.—You may, madam.—You are sensible that now I cannot get that child married too soon; it will be no difficult thing neither; she is a good figure, and has a large fortune. She is deficient in nothing—except what you have just been robbing her of. That, however, is not depicted in the face of a girl, and most fortunately it is so; for, be it said between ourselves, if it were, many a fine damsel could never enter the matrimonial state. This one, therefore, will be provided for as soon as possible; and, as chance might have it that you were to hear in the world of the fool who would be on the point of marrying her, be very particular then in not—Make yourself perfectly easy; I am sensible this adventure must be known to ourselves only!—Very well, sir, I shall say nothing to the young person, for what could I say? She is a little simpleton, who without knowing what she was about, took it into her head to act a part; that is all. Let her continue in her ridiculous but useful error; but that she may neither impart it to anyone, nor perceive it herself, I shall take care to rec-

commend her to her convent, and likewise the good friend with whom she exchanges embraces. If, however, you should deem it proper, we may entrust her cousin with the secret.—Her cousin? —Yes.—Madame de Lignolle? Oh! no, no.—You don't wish she should know of it? To be sure, she is too giddy to keep a secret.—She is.—Besides, your conduct, perhaps, interests her enough.—Not in the least.—Not at all? Ah, sir, now I know that the young person who has explained everything to Mademoiselle de Mésanges is a charming chevalier, and you want me to be still made a dupe of?—Madam.—Let us drop so delicate a subject. We shall resume it in due time. In my turn, sir, I wish you a very good night. Go to rest, if you think proper; but rest assured that I shall not go to sleep again.

I availed myself of the permission; for after the various agitations of that happy and fatal night, it was quite necessary I should enjoy some sleep. Nevertheless, I was not allowed to enjoy it long: the first rays of the rising sun brought into our room Madame de Lignolle, who had a key that opened every door. She awoke me with her kisses: Here you are, my dear Bru-

mont! how happy I am! I did not expect you. I was only told accidentally just now—

She ran to the closet with apparent inquietude; and looking through one of the panes: Aunt, said she, you have placed our young cousin there by herself! You have done right.—Not too much so.—Why not?—Because I have had but a very indifferent night myself.—You have locked her in! Ah! that was better still.—Better! on what account?—Did I say better, aunt?—You did, niece.—I speak inconsiderately; — for — what danger? — Certainly none. In an apartment where none but women slept.—None but women, as you say, aunt; and gentlemen in the adjacent apartments, to protect them in case of——That's it, exactly!—Wherefore, aunt, did you only come at two in the morning?—Because, niece, I wished to bring this dear child with me.—How kind you are!—Very kind, am I not?—Brumont, why did not you send me word?—Don't scold her; it was I who would not suffer you to be called.—You were very wrong, aunt.—You don't speak a syllable, my dear Brumont! you look sad! believe me, I am very sorry too!—For what, niece?—Why, because you have both been

laying very uncomfortable.—Had you a spare bed then for this child?—She would have shared in mine.—That is precisely what I was desirous of preventing, niece.—You, however, would have spent a better night.—Yes, but you?—Pshaw! we arrange matters very well together.—She is a troublesome bed-fellow, though.—Do you find so, aunt?—She keeps in perpetual motion all night long! she was continually laying upon me!—Upon you?—Nearly so.—Nearly! that alters the case!—I unceasingly was pushing her back. She kept me so warm! she smothered me!—she——Dear me! but——What makes you uneasy, niece?—Why, you must have been prodigiously incommoded!—Truly! if that was to happen to me every night! at my time of life!—but for one single time!

The tone of candour in which the sly aunt spoke those last words, entirely quieted Madame de Lignolle. The thoughtless niece only viewed the pleasant side of the matter. Ah! but you, Brumont, she exclaimed, embracing me, you must have had a pretty good night's rest! My aunt has not interrupted your slumbers! Hear me. You are grieved, and so am I, you may be assured. I am extremely sorry



you were not shown where my room was. Yet, let me tell you, don't you think it quite droll—to see you here—thus—close—excuse me, but I can't hold any longer.

In fact, the bursts of laughter withheld for a long time at length broke out. The explosion was so strong, and lasted so long, that the Countess finally fell on the bed and fainted away. This giddy creature laughs so heartily, that she would induce one to laugh also, said the aunt! and she imitated her niece,—I even thought she would soon have surpassed her. How could I not have shared in their joyfulness? Our jovial trio made so much noise, that we awoke *Mademoiselle de Mésanges*.

The prisoner knocked at the window. *Madame de Lignolle*, said the *Marchioness*, open the door to that child: take the key out of my pocket. The Countess, to have done the sooner, used her own key: bade good morning to her cousin, without entering the closet, and returned on my side, to sit on the bed. Young de *Mésanges* followed her close, and kissing me, said: Good morning, my dear.—What is the meaning of this? exclaimed the Countess, surprised and angry: what do you mean by such familiarities,

and calling her as you have done? let me tell you, I don't like Mademoiselle de Brumont to be kissed by anyone; she is not to be called my dear, neither.—You are right, niece, cried the Marchioness, give it her well, she makes too free.

Not be called my dear! resumed our Agnes, now become more bold: ah! that's a good one! As if I did not know that she is my dearest dear?—But, miss, continued Madame de Lingolle, go and put on a handkerchief, if you please, you are stark naked. What does that signify? replied the other; there are no men here.—The Marchioness, counterfeiting her, said: No, there are no men here; but she added in a more blunt tone: mind, there are married women, married women, do you hear? You little simpleton—go—but stop! stop a moment! how dejected and fatigued you look! What have you been about in the night?—What have I been about?—nothing, since I have not even slept.—And wherefore have you not slept?—Wherefore?—Ah! why? because I was listening all the while, in expectation that I might hear you snore.—Snore! that expression!—You are very fond then of hearing people snore!—

That is not it: but when one is in bed by one's self, a something must be done by way of amusement.

While speaking, she played with a lock of hair. The impatient Countess, on a sudden, saluted her with a good slap on her hand; and taking her by the shoulders, brought her back to the closet, with repeated injunctions to put a handkerchief round her neck. The Marchioness applauded: you have acted very wisely, said she; give her a good lecture, she must hear from you some lessons on common decency.—Do me the service, Madame de Lignolle, to help her to dress, that she may have done sooner, and that we may send her home, for I want to speak to you.

The Countess, vexed at being taken away from me for a moment, soon had done with her cousin; and I can assure you, that to dress her from head to foot, she wanted less time than she used to spend in tying one of my petticoats. They both returned within a short time into the bed-room. The Marchioness praised the one for being so expeditious, and desired the other to go and take a walk in the park.—Ah! but it is very early to go and take a walk!—So

much the better, the morning air will cool you.—Ah!—but to take a walk—one must walk—Well, what then?—I can only walk with great difficulty.—Indeed! miss delicate! her shoes pinch her!—No, it is not my shoes. It is not my feet that are sore—You have said enough, go, away with you.—It is most likely somewhere else that I feel pain, because—Marry upon me, interrupted the Countess, this very slow manner of speaking kills me. Is it your stays that hurt you?—Oh, no! Oh no! it is not my stays neither.—For God's sake, what is it then?—Why! most likely I begin—probably I am also becoming fit to be married. I have no patience with her! cried the Marchioness: what nonsense is she come with—pray, Madame de Lignolle, send away the impertinent girl. You don't see that she is at a loss what to say, and only wants to kill time.—Oh, but I do know what I am saying—notwithstanding, it is not very necessary, remember that you have promised to give me notice.

We did not hear the rest, because the Countess seeing her cousin in the gallery, shut the door in her face.—Very well, niece, bolt the

door, that no one should come to interrupt us. Come and sit here, on my bed, but look at me sometimes: you seem to have eyes but for *Mademoiselle de Brumont* alone.—Ah! it is to comfort her; you may see her grieve.—I have noticed her not speaking a word; she does not appear in her usual good spirits.—Neither is she, said *Madame de Lignolle*, kissing me; she laments her not having been brought to my apartment. She certainly bears you great friendship, aunt; but as she knows me better, she would have preferred spending the night by my side, I dare to say—Gently, madam, gently! don't flatter yourself so much. If I had allowed it—Allowed what, aunt?—Why, you imagine because one is not quite so young and so handsome as you are—What do you mean?—I mean that if I had consented—What you are saying, aunt, is—Truth.—Incomprehensible either way.—I shall explain then, niece.—Do make haste, I beg; you keep me on the rack.

*Madame de Lignolle*, it would appear to me very surprising, in fact, but yet very desirable, that you were not so well acquainted with the supposed miss, now in bed by the side of me—

The supposed miss!—I declare, and I wish I may tell you something that will surprise you, I declare, that this pretty girl is a man.—A man! are you—are you sure, aunt?—Sure—and he is there himself to contradict me, if I do not speak the exact truth; he himself offered, less than two hours since, to prove it to me—Offered to prove? no, that cannot be—Don't wonder too much at it, niece, he thought himself bound—Bound! Wherefore?—Ah! ask him.—Say wherefore, cried she, addressing me with extreme warmth. Speak, speak at last, why don't you speak?—I replied; You see me so stupefied at all that happens to me, that I have not sufficient power to speak a word.—He wishes to reduce me to the hard necessity of making the painful avowal, continued the Marchioness, he thought himself obliged, niece, because I exacted it.—You exacted it, aunt!—Make yourself easy, I only shammed.—Only shammed!—As I tell you, but I showed mercy to the generous young man, when I saw that he was ready to sacrifice himself.—Yet he could! cried out the Countess, no less surprised than chagrined.—He could! repeated the aunt. It is, I confess, a compliment to be paid to him.—

He could! said Madame de Lignolle again, in a tone expressive no less of astonishment, than of the deepest affliction.—Those two last exclamations, observed the Marchioness, are not very polite.—He could!—So, then, niece, you wish to make me angry, you would wish, madame, he never were able, but for you—For me!—Madame d'Armincours interrupted her in a most serious tone, Eleanor, I have ever known you to be extremely candid, and with me especially. Before you struggle hard to act contrary to your natural disposition, before you determine to maintain too improbable a falsity, listen to me.

This miss is a man; I have more than one reason, unfortunately, to remove all doubts. In addition to that, I am now acquainted with his name; and everything tells me, niece, that for a long time since you have not been ignorant of it yourself. Yesterday, about five o'clock, I went to Longchamps, where I was surprised to see you, especially at that early hour, you, who in the morning had refused under the pretence of some business to accompany me there in the afternoon. You did not even perceive me, madam, because you had eyes only to look at a cavalier, who on his side was continually look-

ing at you. This was what occasioned me to notice it. It was Mademoiselle de Brumont in man's clothes; or, at least a brother of hers, a brother, absolutely like her in the face, which excited your attention the same as mine. I naturally stopped at that idea, and in my perfect security, I did not even think of carrying conjectures farther. Immediately next to your carriage followed, in a much richer one, a kind of a strumpet very elegantly dressed, who likewise eyed the young man, by whom she was sometimes eyed in her turn. To all appearances that creature does not love you much, and you don't love her more, for she behaved impertinently to you, for which you punished her in style, and I laughed heartily upon the occasion; when on a sudden a great rumour arose. Everybody came running and approached de Brumont, male or female, whom I did not lose sight of, with the intention of calling her to me, and to have some conversation for a moment with him or her.

I, a poor country woman like, amazed at seeing such a concourse of people, enquired whether it was customary with the Parisian ladies to run thus, as if they were crazy, pell-



mell with the men, after the first handsome fellow they met with. All who surrounded me vociferated: Not so! by no means! but this one is deserving of general attention: he is a charming cavalier, already famous on account of an extraordinary adventure; he is Mademoiselle du Portail, the lover of the Marchioness de B—. You can judge of my surprise: I instantly had my eyes opened, recollected a thousand distressing circumstances; and without too much malignity, was obliged to say to myself, that it became very probable that the lover of the Marchioness was also the paramour of the Countess. However, I must not judge too hastily of the conduct of a niece, for whom I have a regard. I will see and observe, I will put questions to her to-morrow, since I am going to join her in Gatinois. By no means! on the wished-for-day, the obliging Madame de Fonrose comes to my house, and proposes to me in a genteel way, the honourable charge of conducting to you your bosom friend. Delighted at a happy chance which favoured my secret designs, I agreed to the proposal, and fully determined to examine closely the young miss, and to prevent the possibility of your reducing me

to perform under your roof the part of a co-adjutant. I arrived with the happy mortal; he fancied perhaps, seeing that you were gone to bed, that he would at least be allowed to share that of young de Mésanges: quite the reverse, I secured him to myself. In the beginning of the night I plagued him; an hour after I—I, nearly as I may say, caught him in the fact. He did not confess his name, which I did not ask him; but he could not deny his sex. At last, it was morn, and that I might entertain no further doubt, I entirely discovered the Chevalier de Faublas.

As she spoke these words, she in fact did uncover me; and with a rapid hand, lifted up the blanket, which she threw almost to my feet, and in the twinkling of an eye brought it back over my shoulders. The moment was short but decisive. Chance that declared against me would have it so, that at the time I lay in such a posture that the most essential evidence could not escape the eye of the accused party, his accomplice, and their judge. Now, my niece, exclaimed the Marchioness, I hope all your doubts are removed; in case, mind me, it were possible to believe that you could enter-

tain any before. But confess, added she, giving me a vigorous slap on the face, with the same hand that had just exposed me in a state of nearly complete nakedness, to the confused looks of Madame de Lignolle,—confess that this M. de Faublas must be a bold little rogue, to have come on this day to sleep with the aunt, for the sole reason that he should go to bed with the niece.

Aunt, exclaimed the Countess, with a little ill humour, why did you strike so hard? You will hurt him.—Hurt him, indeed! He is too well off: it was a favour. Madame de Lignolle, now that you can no longer, under a pretext of ignorance, deny it and refuse, you must immediately desire this gentleman to get up, turn him out of your house without making any fuss, and never let him be admitted again.—Turn him out of my house, aunt! Well, I must tell you, he is my lover; the lover whom I adore.—And your husband, madam?—My husband? he is also my husband; I have no other.—How so, niece? has not M. de Lignolle espoused you nearly five months back?—Espoused me? never! It is he, aunt.—How so? He it is who the first time——Yes, aunt, it is.—Ah!

what a happy little rogue! What an espouser that gentleman is! But, niece, you are pregnant.—So I am, and it is he again.—But—— All butts are done away with now, aunt! It has always been, and ever shall be him; never shall any other——Never any other! How will you be able to manage it.—As I have hitherto done with him, aunt.—What a flow of words! See a little——I see him alone!—But, at least, hear.—I only hear him!—But, at least, listen.—I listen to him only!—Well, niece, will you let me speak to you a moment?—I speak to him alone!—Eleanor, you love me no more, then?—I only love—ah! but I do love you too!—Since you do, let me explain; tell me, unhappy creature, how will you manage to conceal your being pregnant?—I do not intend to conceal it.—But your husband will ask you who is the father of that child.—I shall answer that it is him.—But if he has never gone to bed with you, how will you make him believe?—It is for that very reason that he will believe me.—How, for that very reason?—Exactly so.—Come, niece, we must be blundering some way or other.—You are so quick that you do not give one time to explain.—I am very quick!

you are not so, perhaps, yourself.—How can it be otherwise when I have to deal with such a hot-headed woman as you are! But do me the favour to explain what is to be done to persuade a man, who has never espoused his wife, that he is really the father of the child?—See, how provoking! I request, aunt, you will have the goodness to explain to me how you can imagine that I will hold out to M. de Lignolle so stupid and nonsensical an argument?—It was you who told me so.—Quite on the contrary, I have repeatedly declared to you that it was him by whom I was pregnant.—Ah! I understand you at last; *him* is this gentleman?—To be sure. When I say him, I mean him.—Why, faith, I could not have guessed that. What, you intend going yourself to tell your husband you have made him a——What he deserves to be.—In one sense, I do not say he has not.—In every possible sense he does.—Ah! this is quite another thing! I cannot, madam, approve of your irregular conduct.—My irregular conduct!—Let us return to the important article. If your husband gets angry?—I shall laugh at him.—If he wishes to have you confined in a convent?—He will not be able.—

Who can prevent him?—You and all my friends.—Your friends will turn against you. I cherish you too much ever to do you the least harm; but in so unfortunate an occurrence I shall be forced, at least, to remain neuter. You then will have left only this gentleman.—If I have him left, I shall not want for more.—I admit he will be ready to protect you, but will he have it in his power? And if you are locked up?—No, no; let me tell you, aunt, I was thinking of it in the night; I have a project in my head.—A fine project, I dare to say. Let me hear what it is; tell me.—I cannot now; it is not time yet.—That being the case, I am going now to inform you of the only measure that can be adopted.—I am all attention, my dearest aunt.—You must, as soon as possible, madam, get M. de Lignolle to espouse you, and——That, friend, cannot be.—For what reason?—The reason is that it cannot be. But, although it were possible, I would not consent. Now, aunt, I know what is what, never will your niece go into the arms of a man.—Never into the arms of a man! yet he——He, aunt, is no man; he is my lover.—Your lover! Why, truly, that is a substantial

reason to advance to your husband!—Admitting that the reason is a bad one, it is certain at least that it is preferable to a bad action. Is it not a shameful one, is it not a dreadful act of treachery to go in cold blood and make two men sharers in one's good graces, with a view of betraying the one with greater ease, and keeping the other by reducing him to despair? For I am certain, exclaimed she, as she loaded me with embraces, that he would be exasperated.—If, however, madam, you were disposed to hear me to the end, you would find that your aunt advises neither libertinism nor perfidiousness. You interrupted me, as I was going to tell you, that upon getting M. de Lignolle to espouse you, you must immediately adopt another mode of conduct, and break off this intrigue—An intrigue! Fie, for shame, aunt. Say a passion, which the destiny of my life will depend upon.—Which will make your life miserable, if you don't take care.—No misery with him.—Misery ever attends crime. Listen to me, my dear; I am a good-natured soul, I like to crack a joke; but this is serious business. Consider how many dangers threaten you.—I know of no dangers when he is concerned.—

Your conscience! Eleanor?—My conscience is quiet.—Quiet! that cannot be. You, who never used to speak an untruth, do now. Eleanor, hear me, I cherish you as I would my own child, I have always idolised you, too much, perhaps. I have spoiled you too much, perhaps, but try to remember how I have always made it my study to teach you the best principles with regard to essential matters. To-day, for instance, you are going to crown the Rosiere.

Oh! cried she, rushing into the arms of her aunt, whose hands she also seized to cover her own face, pray don't mention it. I then, penetrated with the tone in which those words had been pronounced, said: Madame la Marquise, to me, to me alone, are your reproaches to be addressed; pardon and pity her, but do not oppress her.—O my children, replied she, if you wish to excite only my sensibility, you will not find it a difficult task: I can be made to weep as easily as to laugh. I have no objection; let us all three shed tears.—Hear me, however, niece, do you remember last year at this same period, on the same day I said to you: Eleanor, I am highly pleased with you; but, ere long, my child, new times will bring on other obliga-



tions; all the duties we have to fulfil in this world are not so pleasing as that of assisting the indigent; the time is near at hand when, perhaps, you will impose upon yourself others, which at first will seduce you, but that subsequently will become painful to you?

The Countess, at these words, hastily relinquished her humble attitude, and, in the most animated tone, repeated: Which at first will seduce you!—Alas! how could they have seduced me? I was not taught to know him; an innocent victim, who promised what she did not comprehend, was gaily led to the sacrifice. You, madam, who now speak to me of duty, did you discharge yours at the time? Dare you affirm you did? When my father and mother, intoxicated with the supposed advantages of this fatal marriage, introduced to you M. de Lignolle, you defended me, I know, by your representations; your consent, I know, was partly extorted by force; but of what avail was your too weak resistance? Were you not to have strengthened it with mine? Were you not bound to take me aside, and to say to me: My poor child, I inform you that they are going to sacrifice you; they impose upon your inexperi-

ence by dazzling promises; will you, for the frivolous advantage of being presented at Court a few months sooner, of going from to-morrow to assemblies, to balls, to the theatres, sacrifice forever your most precious liberty, the only true liberty, that of disposing of your person and of your heart? Do you find yourself so bad with me? Are you in so great a hurry to leave me? It is no longer time to found your virtue on your ignorance; and since they want to deceive you, I must put you on your guard, and enlighten you. When a girl, naturally vivacious, shows herself in the spring moved at the sight of nature, is surprised in frequent reveries, confesses secret inquietudes, complains of a pain she cannot define, it is commonly said that she wants a husband; but I, who know thee, I who have always seen thee caressed by all around thee repay their affection by a similar attachment, repay my cares with gratitude, and cherish me as much as I have loved thee; lament the distress of a vassal, and even pity the sorrows of an entire stranger; I believe that nature has given thee, in addition to burning vivacity, tender feelings; I believe it is not alone a husband, but a lover that you want. Nevertheless

they are determined to have you marry M. de Lignolle. You are not quite sixteen, he is upwards of fifty: your adolescence will hardly commence, when his autumn will be at an end; like all other libertines he will become a valetudinarian, infirm, harsh, morose, and jealous; and, what will complete the fullness of your misery, six times a year, perhaps, you will be obliged, compelled to bear the disgust of his embraces—for my aunt could not have guessed that in my unhappy situation I should have one consolation left, namely, that my pretended husband would never become capacitated to become so.—Never capable? exclaimed she, weeping.—Never, aunt.—Fie! what a nasty man!

You could not have guessed that; so you ought to have said to me; six times a year perhaps you will be obliged to bear the disgust of his embraces; and yet if you were to meet with a young man, handsome, witty, sensible, captivated with your charms, and deserving of you, again you will be obliged to reject his homage that will give offence, and his image that will haunt you. In order to remain virtuous you must continually oppose the sweetest inclination of your heart, and the most sacred law

of nature; if not, your ears will be saluted without relaxation with these dreadful words: oaths! duty! crimes! misfortunes! Thus you may languish for thirty years and more, reduced to the cruel privations of a forced celibacy, and condemned to the still more cruel duties of a tyrannical hymen; and if you should yield to the seductions of an invincible love, you may get interred in your prime, in the solitude of a convent, there to perish soon, loaded with public contempt and the hatred of your relatives. If you had spoken thus to me, Madame la Marchioness, I would have exclaimed; I won't have your M. de Lignolle! I will not have him. I had rather die a maid! and they would not have had me married in spite of myself! perhaps they might have killed me, but they would not have taken me to church!

Never capable! repeated the Marchioness weeping; ah! the nasty man! my poor little dear, how will you manage it? Poor love? There is no remedy then! never capable! that alters the case much! but no, it occasions no change. My dear child you are only to be pitied the more in consequence.—Eleanor, nevertheless, you are equally bound directly and forever

to renounce the Chevalier.—Renounce him! I had rather die.

Why, but I cannot knock louder, cried out young de Mésanges, whom we had not heard.—Go and take a walk, replied the impatient Countess—Ah! I am but just returned from taking one.—Go again.—Ah! but I am tired.—Sit down on the turf.—Why but I am tired of being by myself.—Are we here intended only for your amusement, asked the Marchioness.—Not you, my cousin, if you don't like, but my dear friend.—Your dear friend?—Leave us.—Why but it appears to me it is a long time since we have had some chat together.—Go, miss, go and wait for me in the drawing-room.—Ah! so I will, for I hear a number of people who are getting up.—Go.

Number of people who are getting up, repeated Madame d'Armincours. It is time we should get up too, and that this lady should dress and begone. — Begone! — aunt. — Yes, niece, do you think it is possible she should make her appearance at this festival?—Who can prevent her?—Why! are there not fifty people here, who were yesterday at Long-champs, and will know her again quite as well

as I know you.—No such a thing!—Don't say no! it is impossible otherwise, and you would be ruined.—What signifies! provided he does not go.—When I hear her reason so, it will make my hair stand on end.—How so! am I not the mistress!—Besides, madam, you are bound to send him away, it is your duty.—My duty! there is the word returned again.—Well then, interrupted the marchioness, throwing the bed clothes over my face, I must come to a decision and comply, for with her there is no end to disputes.

Madame d'Armincours, as she hastened to put on a bed-gown and petticoat, exclaimed: great God! now I think of it: everyone would be asking where has this young lady been sleeping! everybody would know that it is—there! would it not be thought that I have my dealings also with the boy. I for the whole day would become the heroine of the adventure—of a gallant adventure, at upwards of sixty! it is being rather late. Come, madam, you must be sensible it is less to spare me being made an object of ridicule, than to preserve your character, and save yourself from ruin, that I appeal to you. He must go.—No, my niece, I will not

suffer you in my presence to act the part of his waiting-maid; I shall dress him as expeditiously, and as decently as you could. Be not in the least afraid: I shall only be le chien du jardinier.

During the time that my toilet lasted, there was a warm contest between the aunt, who insisted upon my going, and the niece who opposed it.

Madame de Lignolle meanwhile was informed it was time she should go down stairs to give her commands respecting the last arrangements relative to the festival. I shall be with you presently, said she to me. A moment after the aunt also left me, and returned before the niece, who nevertheless did not tarry long. Nearly a good quarter of an hour elapsed, and I need not tell that the renewed dispute was getting very warm, when the Countess was called out again. Obligated to leave me once more, she assured me it was only for a moment. But she was scarcely gone down stairs, when her aunt said to me; Sir, I believe you are not quite so destitute of reason as she is; you must be conscious that your presence here may expose her, yield to necessity, yield to my solicitations, and if req-

visite, to my entreaties. She dragged me away, and conducted me through windings entirely unknown to me, into a yard, where her carriage was in waiting for me. As I was stepping into it, chance brought near me *Mademoiselle de Mésanges*. Are you going, my dear?—Alas! I am.—Pray make my compliments to *Mademoiselle des Rieux*.—I will not.—You assure me that it will not be long before she gets fit to be married—Hold your tongue, miss, interrupted bluntly the Marchioness, and if ever you repeat the like——

I heard no more, because the coachman, who had received orders, drove off as quick as lightning. He brought me back as far as *Fontainebleau*, from whence I travelled post. It was near four o'clock when I reached Paris. *Madame de Fonrose* was as good as her word. My father had not been seen; and availing myself of some moments of liberty, I took off my female attire, and went to *Rosambert's*.

I found him much better; he already could, without any foreign assistance, walk about his apartment, and even several times round his garden. The Count began by loading me with reproaches. I represented to him, that I had



sent regularly every morning to enquire how he was.—But you had promised to come yourself.—My father has not left me. That has not prevented you from going somewhere else. I confess, however, that the little Countess deserves the preference.—The little Countess!—Yes, Madame de Lignolle. Did not I tell you before, that henceforth every woman who should be connected with you, would be publicly known? However, I am truly glad that the Marchioness has a rival deserving of being so—for I am told the Countess is an adorable woman. Unfortunately, she is still a child, void of manners, of art, of malice. The Marchioness will crush her to atoms, as soon as she——  
*Apropos*, I wish you joy: you are in high favour with M. de B—. The whole of Paris have seen him smiling by the side of you on the day of your apotheosis! next to that, the excellent husband tells everybody that you are a charming fellow, and for fear the thing should not appear comical enough, he will say to everyone willing to give him a hearing, that I am an infamous character. He is angry with me! extremely angry, I am assured! perhaps I shall have another duel to fight. But you know something

about it, Chevalier. The Marquis has had a long conversation with you.—Oh! the Marquis has told me of all sorts—But, in good friendship, come, Faublas, tell me all about it, I want to be made to laugh, and you ought to try to amuse a friend in a state of convalescence.—No, faith, I confess, that I am very far from wishing to amuse you at the expense of the Marchioness; I shall even repeat it to you, Rosambert, it always grieves me when you speak to me about her. You are wrong; I am, in the present moment especially, her most enthusiastic adorer. Truly, was I saying to myself just now; to all her other qualifications, so numerous already, that woman now adds prudence. Don't you wonder at the profundity of the calculation she had made, namely, that if I escaped her, I should not have it in my power to escape her husband? Chevalier, you will be my second.—Second? Yes, most incessantly.—Most incessantly! you had told me that you would not return to Compiègne?—Second in my fighting the Marquis. Chevalier! make yourself easy! we have passed an agreement that I should not fight the Marchioness again. How can you suspect me of being mad enough to en-

courage the extravagant whims of that woman, who has taken it into her head to attack courageous young men with their own weapons? The more I think of it, do you see, the more I become sensible, that public safety requires the evil to be stopped in its beginning; that would be setting a bad example: only think, if they all wished to adopt the new fashion? all amours would terminate in pistol-shots! What a noise would be heard every day, in every part of this metropolis!

Rosambert, who saw me smile, cracked a thousand jokes, and asked me as many questions respecting such as he styled my mistresses. I at last condescended, with a good grace, to join him in the sport; but his curiosity was not altogether productive of great satisfaction to him.

My father returned to the hotel only two hours after me. He gave me to understand, he was concerned I had been left alone all day. I respectfully observed, it would be carrying kindness too far to incommode himself for his son. He asked me how I had spent the night. Not to tell an untruth, I answered: Partly well, and partly bad, father.—You have not enjoyed

sound sleep? replied he.—Sound, begging your pardon, though frequently interrupted.—You have been greatly agitated?—I have, father, suffered violent agitations.—You have had dreadful dreams?—Oh! very dreadful! one especially, towards the middle of the night, has plagued me most uncommonly.—But in the morning, at least you have slept quiet?—In the morning—no. I was uneasy in the morning.—Fatigue, most likely?—A little fatigue, perhaps, and the recollection of that dream.—I long to hear that dream.—It was, father—there was a woman—Women forever! Oh! my son, think of your wife.—Ah! ever since seven in the morning (the time at which I had set out), I can assure you, that ever since seven, I have almost continually been thinking of her. Father, when shall I hear from her?—You know how many people I have despatched to find her out, and within a fortnight, I propose going with you.—Why not sooner?—Why, replied he with an embarrassed air, I am not ready; besides, we must wait till you get better, till the weather is more settled.—The fine weather! will it ever return so long as Sophia is absent?

Whilst I was speaking at this rate, I nevertheless expected to enjoy some happiness on the day following. The next day was that Monday so ardently wished for, on which my Eleanor and I were to be reunited for some moments. 'Alas! we were disappointed in our expectation. Madame de Fonrose, who came in the evening to pay my father a short visit, found means to tell me there was not the least possibility; the aunt arrived this morning at her house, where she is still.

On the Tuesday it was the same, but on the Wednesday I had the consolation at least, of receiving a note from Justine. It informed me that with a key that was sent me, I should be able to open the street door and every other, of a small new house, situated at the entrance of the rue du Bac, on the side of the Pont Royal. M. le Marquise requested of me to be there at about seven in the afternoon.

Good news! Madame de B— of course is not angry with me, I had not heard of her since the Friday: that long silence, subsequent to our above-mentioned adventure, began to occasion me some inquietude.—Faublas, she is not out of humour! she is not angry! Faublas, happy

young man! rejoice! congratulate yourself! I kissed Justine's note, and jumped for joy.

What propitious news? asked my father, as he was coming in again.—Ah! 'tis that—'tis that—I see it is fine weather; I think I may venture to go and take a walk in the afternoon.—Yes, with me.—With you again, father?—Sir!—I beg your pardon; but do not wish entirely to make a slave of me, to prevent me from going to see a friend.—It is not a friend you would go to visit.—The Vicomte, father.—M. de Valbrun? very well; but after that?—I promise not to go to the Countess's house.—Do you give me your word?—My word of honour.—Be it so; I rely upon your word.

I immediately kissed my father's hand, and cut another joyous caper.

I was so impatient to know what the Marchioness had to say to me, that I was at the place of meeting before the appointed hour. I had plenty of time to run over the house, which I found elegant, convenient, and well furnished. I observed, especially, two small bed-rooms, adjacent to each other; two bed-rooms, which I think I can see on this present day, and which,

in a hundred years hence, if I am still alive, alas! I shall see as plain as I do now.

M. de Florville arrived about dusk: he came to join me in one of the little rooms. I immediately embraced his knees: Right, said the Marchioness, beg pardon of your friend, whom you have offended, whom you have reduced to the absolute necessity of venturing an act of temerity, which might have ruined her, and exposed you.—True, beauteous mamma, but wherefore—wherefore have you—I believe, interrupted she, I verily believe he is going to ask me why I resisted!—Be quiet, sir, stand still; think that instead of renewing your offences, you ought to sue for forgiveness. Chevalier, I need not tell you for what purpose we have met here. You conceive that, after the cruel scene of last Friday, I could not, without acting most imprudently, return to Justine's house.—Undoubtedly, that scene—Chevalier, you speak to me no more of Sophia!—Since my last misadventure, I have so seldom obtained the happiness of seeing you! I have enjoyed it for so short a time! We have had so many—That is very true, but tell me, candidly, don't you love your wife less than you did?

—Less!—Speak out; do not conceal from me your real sentiments; you had promised to apprise me.—Less? more! Madame la Marchioness, each day more! I adore her! it seems as if absence—Yet, Madame de Lignolle.—Ah! yes! she is so dear to me! and is she not deserving of it? I shall ask you, you have seen her, and know her better.—To be sure, the child is pretty enough, and very good natured. I had been misinformed with regard to her disposition. However, I am no longer prejudiced against her. Nevertheless, Chevalier, I think it very extraordinary that you should bear affection so as to even be in love with two women at a time.—Say three, dear mamma.—No! cried she, that is impossible! —I assure you—Do not; it will happen every day that a man prefers his charming wife; that, when she is absent, he regrets her; then even it may happen that he feels a very great inclination, a decided attachment for an amiable woman; but, for two, is what will always appear to me incomprehensible; no, I will never comprehend that the Countess's lover may at the same time be mine; never shall I understand that!—never!



I looked at her attentively; she observed me; probably the embarrassed air which she must have noticed in my whole frame, made her augur unfavourably of my answer; I saw her turn pale; there was a sudden alteration in her voice: This conversation seems to be irksome, resumed she, let us speak of something else.—How does the country look now?—The country?—Yes, you went into the country on Saturday evening, and returned on Sunday; a very short excursion! Tell me, pray, who is one Mademoiselle de Mésanges?—De Mésanges!—Is not that child become infinitely dear to you also?—Infinitely? on what account?—In the first place, she is a female; and, to Faublas, that is the best of all titles; and, next, would it not be too astonishing if, having it occasionally in your power to spend the night with the Dowager d'Armincours and Mademoiselle de Mésanges, you had not given the preference to the latter? Supposing even that you were not allowed to take your choice, I know you to be quite capable, if you slept in the same apartment, of leaving the large room of the old woman, to go and creep into the closet \* of the

\* Madame de B— knew that closet well.

young one. You blush! you do not speak a word!—Madam, if these particular details were true, who could have informed you?—If those particular details were true! I like the supposition mightily! Faublas, do not attempt to tell an untruth: your looks, your countenance, your silence, and your discourse, everything in you speaks you to be guilty. Faublas, I have been indebted to a singular fortuitous event for the discovery of part of these details; but you must well know that whenever I am allowed to have a peep at one corner of a box, I can easily tell what the contents are. I don't know exactly whether you have had it in your power to consecrate the whole of your night to the young person, or only to grant her one single hour; be it as it may, I rely upon your having made a good use of your time. I no longer wonder at her friends already speaking of marrying the girl; I conceive that at present, for more than one reason, it is become a pressing case. However, pursued she, in a most serious tone, I am far from reproaching you for having kept the adventure secret; indiscretion in this case would be infamous, and I do not think you ever could be guilty of such an offence; I

am certain that you will be silent on the subject; I am sure you have not mentioned it to M. de Rosambert?—To M. de Rosambert?—Do you not know him?—Too well!—I believe so, you saw him again on Sunday?—Sunday!—What! have I mistaken the day? Was it not——

I threw myself at the knees of the Marchioness: Oh, my generous friend! forgive me!

At any rate, added she, beckoning me to rise, remember that you are bound in honour to come and see me fight my enemy again.—Your enemy will not——Be as good as his word! I shall know how to compel him. Could it be possible, Faublas, that his punishment should appear less just and less desirable to-day? Ah, speak! your wishes will decide the event of the fight. Do not question it; I prefer dying by the hand of the cruel man, if from you he is to obtain a regret. Don't you know how much I hate the barbarian? He has been the author of all the troubles which to me are insupportable: insupportable! repeated she, weeping. Prior to his vile attempt in the village of Holrisse, I was not quite so miserable; I had lost only my fortune and character. But has not the perfidious

wretch occasioned you too some irreparable loss, some inconsolable sorrow? Ungrateful Faublas! continued she, with extreme vehemence, ought not you to detest him as much as I love you?

Madame de B— ran away, frightened at what she had been saying. I flew after her; I was near reaching her; I was going to—She turned round to me: Sir, said she, if you dare to detain me, you shall never see me again as long as I live. I could read in her face so violent a fright, and a something so determined in her attitude that I dared not disobey her. She made her escape.

On my return home, I found there Madame de Fonrose, who asked me, maliciously, how the Vicomte was; in other respects she was bearer only of sad tidings. Madame de Lignolle, who for some days past had been assailed by the numberless little illnesses, which all announced her being pregnant, now felt seriously indisposed; she could not leave her apartment, neither could I go and see her, because Madame d'Armincours, probably determined to neglect nothing that might cure her niece of a dangerous passion, had let her know that she would

not return into Franche-Comté before Midsummer; she had also begged of Madame de Li-gnolle for an apartment in her hotel, which the niece could not refuse.

A whole fortnight elapsed, during which my Eleanor and I had no other consolation than to send, repeatedly, Jasmin to la Fleur's, and la Fleur to Jasmin's.

During that fatal fortnight, I did not hear at all of Madame de B—. I received from the country no intelligence that could create a hope of Sophia's place of new confinement being soon discovered. Thus deprived of hearing what I held as most interesting to my existence, tedious did I find the days, and long and tedious the nights.

Madame de Fonrose, however, invited both the father and the son to come and dine with her. At seven precisely, under some pretence, I quitted the Baroness's drawing-room, and through secret passages, well known to me, reached her boudoir, of which the Countess opened the door to me. Alas! after long debates, it had been decided on the preceding day that I should stop with my beloved twenty minutes only. I continued a quarter of an hour

above the time, so that I had scarce leisure enough to admire, embrace, and speak a few words to her; to tell her that she daily became dearer to me; that she appeared prettier to me every day. She had hardly time sufficient to protest that my absence killed her by inches; that her tenderness was still increased, and that her love would likewise increase to the latest day of her life.

When I re-entered the drawing-room, there was a dispute; the conversation, however, ceased as soon as I made my appearance.

Most likely, the Baroness, wishing to find out some means of preventing M. de Belcour noticing my long absence, had thought she could do no better than to pick up a quarrel with him. Oh! divine friendship! thou wert given to the weakest sex, to enable them to cheat the strongest, and thou would forever secure the happiness of women, if thou couldst but continue long between them.

The happy *tete-a-tete* which I had obtained, only inspired me with a more eager desire to procure one less short, in spite of Eleanor's aunt and my father, who jointly conspired against us.

In the middle of the following night, as I was thinking of it, I conceived a bold project, which, on the next morning, the Baroness approved of, and which was completely executed before that same day was over. When I awoke in the morning I took great care to be provided with the sick headache; I complained much of it at dinner-time; and in the evening it occasioned me such violent pain that M. de Belcour himself advised my going to bed.

As soon as my father saw I was asleep, he went out; and no sooner was he gone than I had done sleeping. A skilful hairdresser was mysteriously brought into my room by my trusty servant.

Thanks to my own abilities, and Jasmin, my waiting-maid, I soon dressed from head to foot, Mademoiselle de Brumont, whom a very inattentive or absent Swiss did not see go out, and whom a rascal of a hackney-coachman immediately carried to Madame de Fonrose's.

It was very near midnight. We had thought proper not to go earlier to the Countess, for fear of the Marchioness not having yet retired to her apartment. Madame de Fonrose, when we arrived at M. de Lignolle's hotel, would not

allow her carriage to enter the yard, that we might not disturb the rest of anyone. There was nobody up at the Countess's except her husband and her maids, for her aunt was gone to bed, as was expected.

How! why so late? said the Count.—We wanted, answered the Baroness, to come and ask you for a bit of supper, but have been detained elsewhere. This young lady, unable on account of the late hour to be let in at her convent, has not accepted of the bed I offered her, but has preferred coming to beg of you for this night the little room which she occupied in more happy times.—She has done right, replied he.—Very right, exclaimed my Eleanor, and let her come as often as possible, to occasion me such an agreeable surprise. Your father has sent you to a convent then? resumed M. de Lignolle.—Yes, sir, he has.—Where?—I must beg your pardon, but I am not allowed to receive anyone.—I understand, pursued he, quite low, and in a mysterious tone, it is on account of the Vicomte.—There is no possibility of concealing anything from you.—Oh, I was sure of it, because the affections of the soul are familiar to me. What is most surprising, I



have enquired in vain after that young man at Versailles, there is no one there who knows him.—I have already told you, interrupted Madame de Fonrose, who was listening, that he was in high favour with the secretary of state, but that he seldom made his appearance at court.—And I, exclaimed the Countess, have begged he should never be mentioned to me.—*Apropos*, resumed the Count, I am angry with you.—What for?—A fortnight ago, you went into Gatinois to that festival, and early in the morning you departed without—You certainly must have been told that pressing orders had compelled me to return to Paris.—And how do you go on with the charades?—Rather indifferently for some weeks past; yesterday, however, I began again; but so few! so few!—So much the worse. Come, miss, you must make up for the loss of time.—So I will, ere long, sir.—Let me tell you, here is your pupil, whom you neglect; mind what you are about, she will be in an ill humour, dismiss you, and I shall be chosen to replace you.—No, sir, answered Madame de Lignolle, hastily, don't expect it: I have been proposed such a thing not long since, but I have plainly

declared that can never be.—How now! is it mademoiselle who has made that strange proposal?—No, thank God!—Wait a bit, madam! wait a bit! she will, perhaps, some day.—You will see, added he, patting my shoulder, you will find out at last that it is a tiresome business.—To you it may be, replied his wife, but I am very sure Mademoiselle de Brumont is never tired.—Most assuredly, Madame la Comtesse, and for several days past I have been very sorry I had it not in my power to come and give you lessons.—Well! interrupted Madame de Fonrose, give her a lesson, I must be off.—I shall not detain you, replied her friend, for I feel sleepy.—That being the case, said M. de Lignolle, I shall see the Baroness to her carriage, and then retire into my apartment. Ladies, I wish you a very good night.

The Countess immediately sent away her women; and the moment we were left by ourselves, she flew into my arms, and rewarded my happy stratagem with a hundred caresses.

O ye! to whom it has been granted leave occasionally to enter the bed of an adored mistress, and to watch there a whole night for her

sake, if you were truly deserving of such a favour, you must have relished more than one kind of exquisite pleasure! Vulgar lovers know only the hour of enjoyment; more favoured lovers are no strangers to the hour that follows it: this is the time for a sweeter intimacy, better felt eulogiums, more persuasive protestations, enchanting avowals, tender overtures, delicious tears, and of all the voluptuousness that can fill the heart. It is then, that with an equal interest, the fortunate couple remember their first interview, their first desires; then it is, that bringing their thoughts back to the time present, with which they are delighted, they congratulate each other, upon having obtained so much felicity, notwithstanding so many obstacles; it is then, that viewing only in future times a long series of happy days, they indulge with full confidence, the reveries of hope.

Yes, said she, I have formed the best, the most charming of all projects; we shall then live and die together. I shall fill one trunk only with my most necessary clothes, and take away with me my diamonds only: I don't wish M. de Lignolle should have to complain of be-

ing wronged by us: we shall leave France, and settle where you like; every country will appear beautiful to me, since you will be with me. My diamonds are well worth ninety thousand francs: we shall sell them, and purchase in a fine country, not a castle, nor even a house, but a cottage, Faublas! a small handsome cottage; provided there be room enough for one person, for you and I shall be but one.—As you say, my charming friend, we shall be but one.—We don't want two rooms to sleep in. Shall we have two beds, Faublas?—Oh, no! not two beds.—The garden will be large, and we shall have a gardener. We shall marry a pretty country girl to a poor peasant, who will love her: we shall give them our garden, they will cultivate it for their own use, and will allow us to take what we shall want for our support; we shall not want much, you and I only eat to support life. *Apropos*, I don't think of keeping a waiting woman; there would be someone present when I would wish to tell you that I love you; that would annoy me. With regard to my dress, do I want anybody's assistance? Shan't I find out in what manner I must deck myself to please you.—Ah! you will please me in all

manner of dress.—Well, now that is settled, I shall have no waiting woman, but a cook; shall we have a cook?—How can we do without!—How? do you think I would not know how to cook our dinner! our four meals! some butter, milk, eggs, fruit, a fowl; I have learnt to make pastry, I will make you pies, cakes, biscuits, and every now and then some nice creams. Oh! I shall treat you well, you will see! Will not all those appear to you better, sir, when it is I——Better! a thousand times better!—So then, said she, embracing me, we shall be only one in this cottage! Let me see, you will place our money, and it will fetch us upwards of a hundred louis d'ors per annum, so you must see that we will be immensely rich! our food will not cost much, and our clothing will not require much! a light taffeta in summer time, and in the winter season a neat cotton gown is all I shall wish for. You will not want more yourself, my good friend; you need not wear fine clothes to look charming. By this means, we shall scarcely spend one half of our income; and with the remainder, will have it in our power to assist some poor people. One half for us will be a great deal! Fifty louis for the un-

fortunate poor, that is very little! We shall try: first we shall suppress all superfluities, we shall next curtail necessities.—Adorable child! —I am no more of a child than you are; so then, Faublas, you like my project?—I am delighted with it—How happy I am to be possessed of a genius for invention! You never would have found that out—but I have not told you all; you have not heard the most important article.—What is it?—I shall be brought to bed, and will suckle my child.—You will suckle it, dear Eleanor?—I will, and will teach it—first to love you with all its heart! make yourself easy—I will teach it embroidery, to play on the piano—and to make little creams, my Eleanor: it cannot be possessed of too many talents—why, what is the matter with you, my beloved? you weep!—Certainly, I do weep! you laugh when I am speaking seriously! you are jocose when I speak feelingly—It is because I am glad at heart, I assure you—Eleanor, I too wish to educate our child: I will teach him to read—In our eyes, all the love we shall feel for it, interrupted she—to write—Every day! He will write every morning that his mother loves you better than she did on the

preceding day.—To dance——To dance upon my knees, exclaimed she, laughing in her turn.—To fence.—Ah! wherefore? In that country, where we shall be surrounded but by well wishers of ours, what occasion will he have to know how to kill people?—You are right, my Eleanor. When his mother will have taught him how to render himself dear to everyone, he will, like his mother, be defended by the love of everyone.—Such are my projects, Faublas, resumed she; I was certain they would meet with your approbation. We are going to spend the remainder of our days together! we are going, unopposed, to adore each other to the last day of our lives; Madame d'Armincours will no longer come to plague me with her useless representations; your father will not have it in his power again to tear you away from me.—Would I forsake my father?—Ah! Why not? don't I forsake my aunt?—My father, who idolises me!—My aunt does not cherish me less. But if they really feel for us all the affection they manifest, nothing will prevent their coming to join us. I have thought, that from the place of our retirement, we might write to apprise them of our invariable deter-

mination; if they come, it will be for us an increase of happiness, we will have a cottage built for them adjacent to our own; if they resisted our repeated entreaties, we shall consider them as having forsaken us; our reciprocal love will make us forget our ungrateful relatives.— Could I forsake my father, and my—sister?

O Sophia! I did not name you; but you were avenged by my tears.

Your sister may come too; we will marry her to some worthy husbandman, to an honest man who will not marry her fortune, but her person, and will make her happy.—Wherefore are you silent, Faublas? Why do you shed tears?—You see me penetrated with gratitude, my beloved. So many proofs of your so tender love would increase mine, if it were susceptible of an increase; but after mature deliberation, I am obliged to confess to myself, and to inform you I deem it impossible to execute that project.—Impossible! for what reason?—Unfortunately there are several.—I know of one, ungrateful man! your love for Sophia?—I am not speaking of my wife—you don't give a thought to the many necessitous whom your beneficence supports; your wealth is their patrimony.



—Will they enjoy that wealth after my despair has killed me!—You don't reflect on the bustle your flight would occasion. All would call it treachery, all would call your sacrifices an act of folly, and your love for me a disorderly passion. Would you wish to have your memory detested by your relations, and disgraced in your country. What do I care! since I am not quite inexcusable! what do I care for the opinion of the world that does not know me, and the unjust hatred of relatives who have sacrificed me!—Can you hope that Madame d'Armincours will ever consent to follow into foreign parts a niece, condemned by the voice of the public?—Ah! what do I care for my aunt, when my lover is concerned! Cruel man! Do you wish to make me regret the time when I loved my aunt alone?—In short, since I cannot dispense telling you so, consider that both of us, as members of a family, subjects, and married, can, neither of us escape the threefold authority of our families, of the sovereign, and of the law. Against those combined forces, my Eleanor, there is not in the whole universe one single asylum for two lovers.—Not one single asylum! I shall find

one. At any rate let us go, let us disguise ourselves well, change our names, and be concealed in some obscure village, where they will not come to look after us; and if they were to come, we shall have against our persecutors one last resource; we shall kill ourselves.—Kill ourselves!—Yes, live together, or die! I will have you carry me away! and you shall.—We shall kill ourselves! and our child?—Our child? our child! He is right, cried she, with deep despair, he is right! What determination am I to fix upon?—Upon one—equally cruel and indispensable, my dear, my most unhappy dear. Do you recollect what your aunt—was proposing to you the other day?—And you too, Faublas, would give me that horrid advice? It is my lover who invites me to throw myself into the arms of another man.—Eleanor, that sacrifice does not appear to me less painful than it does to you! it is dreadful!—dreadful indeed! more dreadful than death!—Eleanor? and our child?

Suffocated by her sobs, she could not answer me. It appeared to me that the propitious moment was come to detail with force the many reasons that were to convince and persuade

her. All that may be, said she at length, but how can you arrange matters so as to re-capacitate M. de Lignolle?—My dear, you have allowed him one minute only for the experiment; perhaps by granting him a whole night.—A whole night! an age of tortures!—and, the same as at the first time, I shall be obliged to go and tell him that I will have it done?—Let us beware. Your frequent sick headaches, your being often sick, and many other circumstances must already have caused inquietude to M. de Lignolle. If after six months' silence you were to give him peremptory orders, your husband might conceive strange and dreadful suspicions. We have no other means left than to apply to a skilful, discreet and complaisant physician, who will come and examine your supposed illness, and prescribe marriage.—Where is such a man as you describe to be found?—Everywhere. Our doctors are men of honour, accustomed to keep family secrets, to maintain peace between married couples, and—So I must trust a stranger!—why indeed, I don't find that to be necessary. A friend can.—I'll tell you what, I will provide the physician.—Your tears begin to run again, my Eleanor!

Ah! the same as yours, my heart is torn.—I am going to immolate myself, said she sobbing, and shall become less dear to him. I shall no longer be his wife, I shall only be his mistress.

I succeeded in calming her inquietude; but I made vain efforts to comfort her, for the misfortune with which she was threatened. She wept in my arms till four in the morning; as I was obliged to leave her then, we agreed that two days after I would bring the physician, and that the painful sacrifice was to be accomplished on the following night.

Totally preoccupied on the preceding day with the desire of seeing her, I had, while thinking of the means of gaining admittance to her apartment, entirely forgotten those of getting out of it. My dear, I think of it rather late, how shall I manage to return home.—Alas! you are going away, my dear!—Yes, but I have only woman's clothes by me. A young girl in full dress, running about the streets at four o'clock in the morning by herself, will create suspicion; the guard will arrest me, and I don't at all wish to be carried again to Saint Martin.—Is that all? replied she. Wait a bit I shall get up too, we shall call up la Fleur;

without making a noise he will put the horse to the gig, and attended by my servant I shall see you to your own door, and by this means we shall continue longer in each other's company. I shall tell M. de Lignolle it was indispensable for you to return to your convent by day break.

What she proposed was executed. La Fleur, who appeared entirely devoted to us, served us most zealously. Madame de Lignolle left me only at the moment when my faithful Jasmin, hearing the signal previously agreed upon, came running to open the gate of the hotel. I went to lay down, and it was striking ten when M. de Belcour awoke me. He asked me if I had had a good night.—Very good, father.—And the sick headache?—The sick headache! ah! I still feel some secret pain from it! but it does not signify! may I, at the price of several days' sufferings, obtain occasionally similar nights to that I have just spent.

I had scarcely ended those words, when good fortune brought in M. de Rosambert. My father, who had not seen the Count since his unfortunate duel at la porte Maillot, overwhelmed him with civilities. The Baron at last went down into his apartment. As soon as

we were left alone, Rosambert began reproaching me again: You have given me your word of honour, said he, and yet a fortnight has elapsed—You see, my father never leaves me. I might have gone to your house, but with him.—That would have procured me at least the pleasure of seeing you.—Come, Rosambert, a truce to compliments, and confess candidly that the Baron's visit would not prove very agreeable to you. M. de Belcour is very amiable, but he is my father. It is the company of young people that you like.—It is that which I prefer. Chevalier, have you heard a great piece of news? You will remember perhaps a certain obliging Countess, who, the first time that I conducted you to a ball-room, carried me away that you might be left with Madame de B—. Undoubtedly I do remember her; she is pretty enough.—You need not tell me so; nobody knows it better than I do. This Countess had for a long time since been intimate with the Marchioness; it is assured that those two ladies were equally interested in sparing each other; yet they are no longer upon very good terms. Their rupture makes a great noise in the world, and is spoken of diversely. One

day, as I was going to pay my first visit to the Marchioness of Rosambert,\* I found the lovely Countess at her house, and she manifested a great friendship for me; it was not very difficult for me to find out that she wished for my alliance.—Ah! no more on the subject—let me tell you, Rosambert, that you are come very *apropos*; I was going to write to beg of you to render me a service of importance.

Of my adventures with Madame de Lignolle, I only conceal those parts in which Madame de B— was connected; I spoke much about the aunt and the niece, but took great care not to say a word about the cousin. My recitals, though curtailed, supplied him with an inexhaustible subject of pleasantry; and when his merriment had been sufficiently exercised: I already feel strong enough, said he, to attend upon some pretty female patients; besides, it is impossible to refuse so ludicrous an errand as that which Mad. de Brumont honours me with; to-morrow she will see me at the Countess's, ready to answer her confidence in me; to-morrow she will do me the justice to own that the most scientific doctor could not have taken

\* His mother.

better measures than myself to secure to the impotent M. de Lignolle the honours of paternity.

A moment after the departure of Rosambert, the Baroness came to see us. I was surprised at first to hear her speak as follows to M. de Belcour: M. de Lignolle has never espoused his wife; it is a fact which every person is acquainted with, and still his wife is with child! you know of it, Baron; for that avowal, with which she has suddenly astonished you, she would, immediately after, and with the same candour, have regaled her husband, if Madame d'Armincour had not opposed it. The question now is to save the thoughtless girl, who deserves to be pitied; there is but one single mode, however, namely, to contrive to induce the unworthy husband to consummate his marriage, which is no trifling matter; but something more difficult still, perhaps, is to prevail upon Madame de Lignolle to suffer the attempt to be made. I can see no one in the whole world but the father of the child who will be able to persuade the mother to a determination, for which, whoever knows the lover and the husband, will be sensible that no small share of fortitude is



requisite. A doctor is to be let into the secret, who will prescribe the conjugal union; the husband will hear the sentence, and the aunt will press the execution of it. All is ready for to-morrow; but the whole will fail if Mademoiselle de Brumont is not present. Allow me, then, M. le Baron, to call soon and take your son in his disguise, and conduct him to Madame de Lignolle; Mademoiselle de Brumont will spend the day there, and I promise to bring her back again in a moment; the little lady overwhelmed with sorrow will want to be comforted by a look from her friend. Your son on that day, I give you my word of honour, will return to dine with you.

M. de Belcour, plunged in serious thought, kept silence for a while: Madam, said he, at length, will you promise not to part from this young man for one single moment? She promised. He then addressed me: Twice more put on Mademoiselle de Brumont's clothes; but, remember, that after that you are to take them off, and never to wear them again.

Madame de Fonrose had not taken leave of us for a quarter of an hour, when M. de Belcour received a note. The Baron, upon reading

it, assumed a gloomy air, some signs of impatience also frequently escaped him, and he exclaimed several times: In fact, that appears probable!—Some bad news, father?—Yes, bad, my son.—Nothing about Sophia?—Sophia! not a word.—Nor my sister?—Nor your sister, neither.—Farewell, sir; may you sleep well this night, although the last was a good one; to-morrow put on the perfidious disguise, and after to-morrow, in the forenoon, you have my leave, but it be for the last time; for the last time, understand me well!

On the next day, before twelve, the Baroness and I were at Madame de Lignolle's; we had not long to wait for the doctor. No one could have recognised in his new costume, the friend of the Chevalier de Faublas. He was no longer that elegant young man, thoughtless, jovial, replete with grace and amiableness; he was, however, a handsome doctor, gallant, courteous, lively and charming, like the rest of them. He advanced straight to my Eleanor.

This is the patient; there is no occasion to point her out to me! What is her illness? Where does it settle? with such a figure, and such eyes! It must be the consequence of de-

rangement somewhere? It requires a great knowledge of the case to find it out here! But, a little patience! it will decamp ere long.—Monsieur le Comte knows the new piece? Good for nothing.—I have not seen it myself, I have not one hour's respite! Crowds of patients assail me! It is natural enough though; they are tired of getting killed by others.—My fair lady, let me feel the pulse. Ah! what a sweet hand! the charming hand! He kissed it.—What are you doing? said the Countess, with a laugh.—I know well others will feel it, I listen to it; through this so fine skin, I could even see it.

The MARCHIONESS D'ARMINCOUR.—The doctor is jocose! (In a low voice, to Faublas): Receive my best thanks; it is you no doubt who have persuaded my niece to adopt the only measure that could save her; and to this service, add that of never being connected with her again; and I shall say, notwithstanding your former wrongs, that you are certainly a man of honour.

ROSAMBERT.—There is a rumour of an approaching war. The emperor has projects of conquest; if I were in the place of the grand

signior, I would collect five-hundred-thousand men, cross the Danube—it is agitated, my fair lady—

The COUNTESS (laughing).—Who? the grand signior on the Danube?

ROSAMBERT.—Well! very well! we will cure you; you like a joke. Your pulse, my fair lady; there is a *je ne sais quoi*, which causes it to beat too quick—and I would go and lay siege to Vienna—Madame complains of being sick, I believe—

The COUNTESS.—You commit a mistake, doctor, for though I feel sick, I don't complain of it.

ROSAMBERT.—However, you must take great care, madam! Your sickness proceeds from an affection of the heart! and the heart is not to be sported with! It is the noble part—and you are sensible that if I were to lay siege to it, it would be with the intention of taking it; and immediately after its surrender, I would march straight up to Saint Petersburg, to go and pay a visit to that ambitious empress.—Does she sleep well?

MADemoiselle DE BRUMONT.—Doctor, the ambitious sleep but little.

ROSAMBERT.—Oh! it is Madame I am speaking of.

The COUNTESS (still laughing).—Me, that is quite another thing; for some time past I have not slept well.—(She then assumed a serious and tender air, and casting at me a sudden but significant look, added): I nevertheless never entertained any other ambitious desire, but of being able to do without doctor's prescriptions.

ROSAMBERT.—Truly, my fair lady, I confess it would be better to do without; but, necessity, when pressing, must be attended to—At the end of the campaign, I would return to recruit myself in my seraglio—but I would have French women in my seraglio! and you, Monsieur le Comte?

M. DE LIGNOLLE.—I likewise.

ROSAMBERT.—Ah! it is not to be disputed; none are so amiable as the French women! I behold some here who are charming; you, for instance, sir, possess one who is worth a thousand others; but only imagine how delightful, if you had two or three hundred more like her, without reckoning many more that you might send for, and have brought from Italy, Spain, England, Golconda, Cachemira, Africa, Amer-

ica, and, in short, from all the different parts of the world.

The BARONESS (laughing).—Gently, doctor. What a sultan you would be!

The COUNTESS (to her husband).—I believe that so many people would only occasion you some uneasiness.

ROSAMBERT (to the Countess).—Yes! it might create a little jealousy! But don't be angry with me. It was not in earnest that I advised M. le Comte. (To M. de Lignolle): Do you give her much exercise?

M. DE LIGNOLLE.—Exercise! She takes too much, she kills herself.

ROSAMBERT.—Young women like that, and they are right: they seldom feel the worse for it—Do you enjoy a good appetite, madam?

The COUNTESS.—I did formerly, but I have lost it.

ROSAMBERT.—You have lost it—you don't sleep—My fair lady, your soul is affected with some secret trouble.

M. DE LIGNOLLE.—Are you acquainted, doctor, with the affections of the soul?

ROSAMBERT.—Better than any man in the world.

M. DE LIGNOLLE.—Better! that is soon said. But we shall see; allow me to put your deep knowledge to the test: is mine own soul in its complete equilibrium?

ROSAMBERT.—Your soul? Do you think I can't see, that at this present moment there is a something that perplexes it?

M. DE LIGNOLLE.—What is that?

ROSAMBERT (in an ill humour).—You insist upon it! I will speak it all out: what perplexes your soul, is in the first place, the situation of your lady, because, if her illness became serious, and that your wife should die, you would be obliged to return her marriage portion.

M. DE LIGNOLLE (haughtily).—M. le Docteur, you offend me!

ROSAMBERT (in high spirits).—It is your own fault, M. le Comte. Wherefore do you not treat learned men with that consideration and respect that are due to them?—What, moreover, tortures your soul, is the composition of some work of genius, that does not go on as quick as you could wish; for I do not look at your dress, which informs me, that you are a military character, it is your soul that I ex-

amine: it is depicted in your countenance—in your looks: I can read there that you cultivate letters with success.

M. DE LIGNOLLE (with a satisfied air).—You see very right; you are a skilful man. To tell you the truth, I am now already tormented about a charade.

ROSAMBERT.—What! Am I so fortunate as to have met the Monsieur de Lignolle, who fills our public papers with his poetry, who supplies the *Mercuré* with his masterpieces!

M. DE LIGNOLLE (in a transport of joy).—Masterpieces?—You are too kind. However, I am the M. de Lignolle whom you are speaking of.

ROSAMBERT.—Oh! sir, excuse the little report—

M. DE LIGNOLLE.—I beg you will not mention it! I must beg your pardon; for I confess that it were difficult to carry further the knowledge of the soul—

ROSAMBERT.—I have heard that the Countess would also meddle with charades.

The COUNTESS.—Yes, I have composed one.

ROSAMBERT.—Very well, my fair lady; go



on, it will amuse you. Be not uneasy on account of your actual indisposition; your illness will be a mere nothing; it is only a case of plenitude—To be sure there is a plenitude; but whence does it originate?

He then held his head between his two hands, and for a long time appeared absorbed in deep reflection; he next looked most attentively at the Countess. Upon my honour, exclaimed he, afterwards, this is beyond my comprehension; for after all it is the case of a maiden, and this handsome person is Madame la Comtesse—(To M. de Lignolle, low, but distinctly, so that we did not lose a syllable): Tell me, you must neglect your charming wife very much? We could not hear the husband's answer; but Rosambert resumed: It must be so, though, for there is plenitude, redundancy, a complete plethora; and if you do not remedy it, the jaundice will infallibly come next; and after the jaundice—why, faith, you would have the marriage portion to return; take care of yourself.

M. DE LIGNOLLE (in a faltering voice).—I can assure you it is not in the marriage portion—

ROSAMBERT (to the Countess).—How long have you been married?

The COUNTESS.—Very near eight months, doctor.

ROSAMBERT.—Eight months! she must be very near her accouchement.—*M. le Comte*, do your duty to Madame: this very night! or I could not answer for the consequence.

M. DE LIGNOLLE.—Doctor, observe—

The MARCHIONESS D'ARMINCOUR (harshly).—No observations. A child!

The BARONESS (in a caressing tone).—A child to this little one; what would that cost you?

M. DE LIGNOLLE.—But—

ROSAMBERT (in a friendly tone).—Ah! no buts. A child!

The MARCHIONESS D'ARMINCOUR (weeping).—Alas! doctor, perhaps you prescribe to him what is impossible.

ROSAMBERT (pointing to the Countess).—How so? Impossible! does the lady refuse her consent?

The COUNTESS (with tears in her eyes).—I—

MADemoiselle DE BRUMONT (throwing her—

self at the knees of the Countess, low)—Eleanor, think of me, think of our child—(aloud) Madame la Countess, if you pay the least return to the tender attachment of your aunt, to that of your friends and to mine, say that you consent.

The Countess lifted up her eyes to heaven, then turned them towards me, and, dropping her hand into mine, heaved a deep sigh and was heard to pronounce the fatal: I consent.

ROSAMBERT (to M. de Lignolle).—Well! she consents; what have you to say now?

The MARCHIONESS D'ARMINCOUR (sobbing).—That he cannot achieve it, the traitor!

ROSAMBERT.—That he cannot! That is what I shall never be made to comprehend. The repugnance is not probable; the wife is a charming woman!—Neither is it owing to the want of physical powers? you are quite in your prime yet. What is your age? About sixty?

M. DE LIGNOLLE (rather angrily).—Very little more than fifty, sir.

ROSAMBERT.—You see! but though you were double, these charms are capable of reviving a centenarian.

THE BARONESS.—Be it so, doctor; but give me leave to introduce a quotation:

On dit qu'on n'a jamais tous les dons à-la-fois,  
Et que les gens d'esprits, d'ailleurs très estimables,  
Ont fort peu de talent pour former leurs semblables,\*  
DESTOUCHES, le Philosophe marié.

ROSAMBERT.—With regard to men of wit, be it so; but a man of genius! a man like M. le Comte, is in every respect superior to other men.—Wait a moment, though it is very possible that we were all right, as I can demonstrate.—Authors who compose, by dint of perpetual meditation, force the blood and the humours continually to flow towards the head; it is to the brains therefore that all the spirits are carried; unfortunately the brains being incessantly exercised, acquire strength only at the expense of the other parts that languish. The left arm, for instance, which you use much less than the right, is much the weakest. Well it is the same in this case. The head of a man of letters, is his right arm: all the rest of him

\* It is said, that we never are possessed at the same time of every qualification; and that men of wit, very estimable in other respects, have very little talent to produce their like.

is the left; which is so much the better for glory, but so much the worse for love.

The MARCHIONESS D'ARMINCOUR.—What do I care for glory! have I married my niece, that she might be regarded with glory alone?

ROSAMBERT.—Rightly spoken! all ladies are of the same opinion on that point; but be comforted, a remedy is near at hand: I who am now speaking to you, have, in a similar case performed a miraculous cure, upon every member of a provincial academy.

All the members of that literary society were labouring under the same disease as M. le Comte appears to be afflicted; all the married women in that small town looked emaciated, and exhibited sallow complexions. Provincial wives, who are very particular respecting the article of matrimonial duty, were unwilling to die without complaining; they cried out against literature; they hallooed! and made an infernal roaring! Their good fortune would have it so, that I was travelling that road, was recognised, and called upon to attend them. I found out at once, that by re-establishing the equilibrium of the humours, and the ordinary circulation of the blood, everything would return of itself to

its natural state. For those literati, who were very willing to be made men again, I composed an excellent potion, a wonderful potion—a potion in short! The success was prodigious. From the very next day, the complexion of every complainant looked to be brighter; but what happened to be most remarkable in the adventure was, that at nine months from the period, on the same day, and nearly at the same hour, all my academical females were delivered of a stout boy, well constituted; of a boy, do you hear! because the fathers had gone to work with incredible ardour!

What occasions my laughing, is a pleasant circumstance I just recollect. Only think, this day of general delivery, which the ladies seemed to have appointed, happened to be a day of meeting, each husband lost his counter. This, which proved a subject of great mortification for the first literary characters, was a source of amusement for the whole town.

M. le Comte, I am returning home, in order to compose a like potion for you only, as I imagine that you are possessed of more genius than those gentlemen, you must have suffered more in your constitution than they had, and,

of course, I shall double the doses. I shall send you the paternal draught this evening; swallow it up at one draught, and I warrant that in the night Madame will hear of it. Mademoiselle de Brumont and I shall call to-morrow morning to admire the effect of the remedy. He added, in a lower tone of voice: Don't fail, for it is a pressing case. It would be a great pity to bury that young woman, and to have her portion to return. I must leave you; the whole town are waiting for me. Good morning to you, sir; ladies, your servant.

His departure released me from a heavy burden; for I could see the doctor continually getting into better spirits, and I was afraid that he had already carried the joke too far. However, M. de Lignolle's satisfied look, and tone of confidence quieted me. Without being decomposed at the bitter reproaches of Madame d'Armincours, he proudly replied: Is it my fault if glory and love do not agree? Have you not heard the doctor? He is a very clever man: I certify he is, and since he takes it upon himself to re-establish the equilibrium, you will see—to-night you will see!—He went away much pleased with himself.

As soon as he was gone, the Baroness, who could hold no longer, burst out laughing. Where in the name of patience, asked she, have you found out that truly amiable physician?—In fact, interrupted the Countess, who laughed and wept at the same time, your friend is very entertaining! quite so! He has found means to enliven one of the most distressing moments of my life.—And what he says is sound reasoning, exclaimed Madame d'Armincours: full of sense! What is the name of that charming man?—Rosambert.—The Count de Rosambert! said the Baroness: the unfortunate lover of Madame de B—! I have heard him spoken of with high encomiums, which he appears to be deserving of.—The Count de Rosambert! repeated the Marchioness; that is the name! he is the same young man who was recommended to me to—he is your intimate friend!—He is madam.—I am very glad of it; that young man carries his recommendation on his countenance, he does not in the least bear the appearance of being another M. de Lignolle!

Madame d'Armincours not long after asked me politely whether I was not going. The Countess immediately declared she insisted



1. 在 1990 年 12 月 31 日以前, 被征收人已经取得房屋所有权, 且房屋所有权人已经取得房屋所有权证书的, 应当由房屋所有权人向征收人申报房屋所有权, 并依法缴纳契税。



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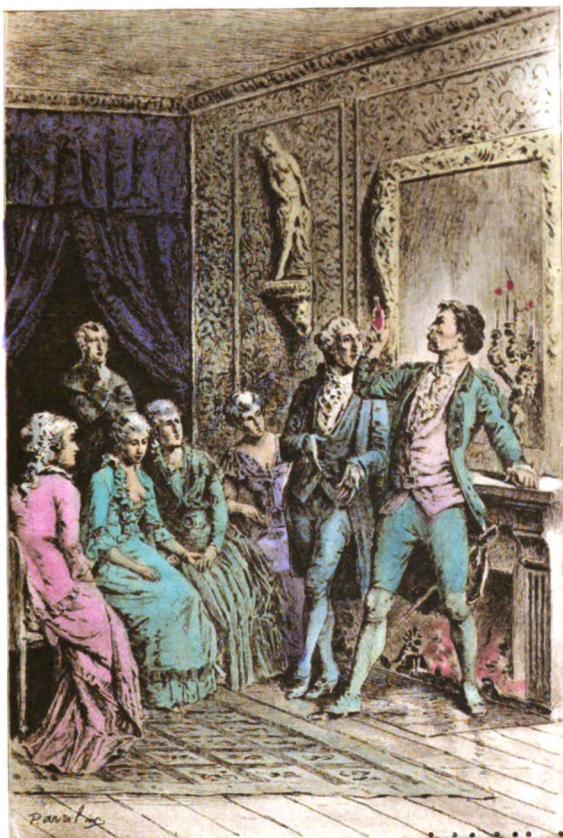
upon my remaining with her the whole day long; she even protested I should not leave her before the fatal hour, and that if she were compelled to send me away sooner, she would not allow M. de Lignolle to enter the apartment.

Another act of imprudence! exclaimed the Marchioness. It is high time there should be an end to all this. Madam, I tell you over again; people begin to talk about the world; there must have been some shocking bad rumours circulated against you, for several times within a few days, some folks, even in my presence, have indulged scandalous jokes respecting our Mademoiselle de Brumont, with whom you are said to be intimately connected; how is it possible that your secret, a secret, of this nature, which for a long time since has been entrusted to so many individuals, should be well kept? I beg of you, niece, henceforth let your conduct be regulated by my advice; if it is not for my sake, let it be for your own. Do not ruin yourself, do not obstinately insist upon detaining—I insist, aunt, upon her stopping till night, and her coming to-morrow at an early hour to comfort me.—Since you will have her stay, I must yield consent; but you

*But as soon as he had tasted it, we saw him make horrid grimaces,  
and finally place the vase on the mantel piece.*

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must allow me at least not to leave you.—Alas! you might leave us without any risk, you may stay to-day, as well as to-morrow—the same day, I assure you, shall not witness an odious shame.

Notwithstanding, the Marchioness did not leave us, my Eleanor found means to say to me: My aunt does not know that you lately have spent a night here; I have requested M. de Lignolle not to tell her of it. I observed to him, that Madame d'Armincour, naturally talkative, might, perhaps, mention it to some one, who might accidentally repeat it to your father, and thus bring you into trouble. So you see, my dear, that we may still expect more than one happy night—But it will neither be to-morrow, nor even—Oh, no! I could not pass on a sudden from the arms of such a man, into the arms of my lover.

Tedious as the day was, yet to us it appeared too short. The fatal potion was brought very punctually. The Count at first seized it with avidity; but as soon as he had tasted it, we saw him make horrid grimaces, and finally place the vase on the mantel-piece; most luckily it was nearly empty; Madame d'Armincour



never could persuade him to drink the small quantity of the liquor he had left.

The cruel moment arrived. The Countess went to bed when the clock had struck twelve. I saw her bathe her pillow with her tears, I saw her secretly kiss the place where my head had rested two nights before. My dear Eleanor! What a farewell I did hear her pronounce, with what a look was it accompanied! my soul was lacerated. Her plaintive accent and dolorous glance, seemed both equally to upbraid me for the horrid sacrifice which was soon to be accomplished. My dearest Eleanor! she was as pale and trembling as a felon under sentence of death. Was that the woman, who half a year before, would say to her husband in a decided tone: I insist upon it? Love! O Almighty Love, what an empire do you exercise over our minds and our hearts!

On my return home, I was overwhelmed with grief. M. de Belcour tried useless efforts to disguise how deeply concerned he felt for my sorrows. What a sad night I did pass! Pardon me, however, my Sophia! pardon me; it was not you entirely who this time occasioned my restless night; but at least, you still know, as

well as your unfortunate rival, how to excite my lively regret, and tender commiseration; you were at least, upon my rising, the first object of my solicitude.

You told me, father, that in a fortnight, we were to go and fetch my wife; upwards of a fortnight is elapsed.—He answered with an embarrassed air. I have some indispensable business to attend to first—I don't think now it will be long—have patience for a few days.—I wish you good morning, father.—Whither are you going so early?—To dress, and go to the Baroness, and from thence to the Countess—you have given me leave. I most assuredly will return to dine with you, father.

We did not call for Rosambert; he had appointed his hour, and we were both punctual, that upon our arrival at M. de Lignolle's, we saw the doctor's carriage in the yard. This was a job coach, well chosen for the present occasion, with outside steps, French fashion, the body straight and long, a kind of a gothic vis-à-vis, the demi-fortune of a physician. We met Rosambert, who was gravely ascending the stairs. Madame d'Armincours advanced with tears in her eyes, to open the door of her niece's

bed-room. The niece, on the contrary, rushed into my arms, with all the signs of extreme satisfaction. Surprised, I asked her very earnestly, what could occasion her such joyous transports? Congratulate me, exclaimed she, congratulate yourself, that M. de Lignolle—is not changed in the least—he is not as yet M. de Lignolle—neither am I his wife—your Eleanor is yours only.

At the same moment, M. de Lignolle, who undoubtedly had heard the doctor coming, entered the room, and without showing the least confusion, addressed Rosambert as follows: Doctor, the equilibrium is not re-established; what say you to that?—What say I? that it is not the fault of my remedy; that you are a man of genius, as few are to be met with.—Most fortunately, exclaimed the aunt.—A man of genius incurable! pursued Rosambert; a man of genius, whose head will ever be wonderful, but who, for all the rest, will remain impotent all his life-time.—I should have acted right, perhaps, resumed the Count, showing the phial, if I had not left that.—Certainly you would have acted better; but it does not signify: the quantity that you have drank, sir, would have

sufficed for four ordinary literati. I am not a man to impose upon, or to trifle with my patients, since that has produced no effect, you will not recover, you never will get better, never.—What! do you think that the course——

The Count was interrupted by the sudden arrival of his brother, the Vicomte de Lignolle, a captain in the Royal Navy. The impatient sea-faring man rushed into his sister-in-law's apartment without waiting till he had been announced. He was a man five feet ten inches high, bulky, and strong in proportion, a kind of an Hercules, with black hair, large mustachios, a long sword by his side, a savage look, and the whole countenance of a bravo.

The CAPTAIN.—Good morning to you, brother: good morning everybody.

M. DE LIGNOLLE (apparently pre-occupied).—Good morning, my dear. (To Rosambert.) You are of opinion, that the course of the blood and of the humours is invincibly determined?

The CAPTAIN.—Who is ill here?

ROSAMBERT.—Your sister-in-law.

The CAPTAIN.—She is indisposed, that wo-

man? perhaps it is so much the better. Zounds, we shall see.

The BARONESS (in a low voice, to Mademoiselle de Brumont, who had just cast a threatening look at the Vicomte).—I believe I have spoken to you sometimes of this enormous personage; his coming here appears to bode us nothing good. Above all things, be patient and moderate.

ROSAMBERT.—Your brother is not quite as he should be.

The CAPTAIN.—What ails you?

M. DE LIGNOLLE.—Why!—I am deficient in equilibrium.

The CAPTAIN.—Thunder and lightning! I believe you want to crack your jokes! I see you standing firm upon both your legs, and as erect as I am.

ROSAMBERT.—That is not the equilibrium in question; that is the universal equilibrium. The one which the gentleman is in want of, is the right proportion of the affections of the body.

M. DE LIGNOLLE.—And of the affections of the soul; that is——

The CAPTAIN.—Oh! the affections of the

soul! I wondered at your not having bothered me with them before. (To Rosambert). Hear me, good sir, all that may be very fine what you are speaking about; but may five hundred devils seize me, if I understand a word of it!

ROSAMBERT.—That, however, is very plain; but I will explain it to you over again. The body of the wife is ill, because the mind of the husband is too well. I have prescribed for the restoration of the lady's health that she should procreate.

THE CAPTAIN.—Procreate! Apropos, brother, do you know it is reported that your wife does not want you for that achievement?

MADemoiselle DE BRUMONT.—That *apropos* is very impertinent! Do you know, captain, that if all naval officers were like you, they would be very disagreeable gentlemen?

THE CAPTAIN.—Pray, my young miss, perchance are you worth a brother?

MADemoiselle DE BRUMONT.—What then! if I had one?

THE CAPTAIN.—Though you had thirty, I would beg of them, one after another, to meet me behind the convent of the Carthusian friars.

MADemoiselle DE BRUMONT.—I believe,

captain, notwithstanding your menacing airs, that the first who would go, might spare the rest the trouble of taking the walk.

The CAPTAIN (with contempt).—You are very happy you are but a female.

The tone in which he pronounced these words fully quieted me respecting the equivocal sense of his previous questions. I was going to reply angrily, when the Baroness, who continually watched over me, said in a whisper: For God's sake! be composed! think that your Eleanor's safety is at stake. Madame de Lignolle, meanwhile, with her well-known vivacity, just then signified to her rude brother-in-law that, if he continued thus to treat her with disrespect, she would have him turned out of doors. Don't mind what he says, exclaimed the Count; he is a hot-headed fellow.

ROSAMBERT (to the Captain).—Sir, whoever has told you the impertinent story you have just repeated, has told you a lie; it is my business to understand those matters, and this very minute, if required, I am ready to sign that Madame la Comtesse, on the contrary, stands in great need of her husband for the said purpose. Unfortunately, M. le Comte does not in

the least want his wife! not at all. He is so constituted that in his whole person the intellectual part preponderates over the material.

The CAPTAIN.—True! my brother is far from being stupefied; he composes——

ROSAMBERT.—Very well so far; but it is not with his wit that a husband can cause his wife to be pregnant. I therefore wished, in the present case, to force the mind to suspend its operations a little, that it might not impede the body sometimes performing its functions also; I wished to re-establish the equilibrium.

M. DE LIGNOLLE (laughing, to the Captain).—He has not succeeded. Look here! you who understand chemistry, look at this, I have drunk all that is wanted in the phial.

The CAPTAIN (after shaking the bottle, and applying a drop of the liquid to his tongue).—Hell and fire! who is the cursed ass who has composed for you this horse medicine?

M. DE LIGNOLLE.—It was not an ass. It was the doctor.

ROSAMBERT (bowing to the Captain).—It was the doctor, Mr. Censor! A proof of my potion not being too strong, is that it has produced no effect.



The CAPTAIN.—What the deuce! a decoction of cantharides! the most powerful approsidiac! and in such a dose!—If I were to take the twenty-fifth part I should be like a madman for five-and-twenty nights! That would have sufficed to infuriate the whole of my crew.

The MARCHIONESS D'ARMINCOUR (weeping).—And yet it has produced no effect.

The CAPTAIN.—No effect! why zooks! my poor brother, there must be ice in your heart, in your entrails, all over you. In the name of patience what stuff has our dear mother made you of? It is not the same blood, at least, that runs through our veins! no, it cannot be the same blood. True, indeed, I am a younger brother, your junior by upwards of a twelve-month, without any compliment, but at all times, it must be confessed——

M. DE LIGNOLLE (rubbing his hands).—It is my genius, in fact, that occasions that.

The CAPTAIN.—What a deuce of a genius! I am very glad, however, that you have entirely monopolised it; for, according to your own account, you have had genius from an early period of your life. At all times, that is what I wanted to say, my dear elder brother at all

times has cut but a very poor figure among the fair sex.

The MARCHIONESS D'ARMINCOUR.—Since you knew of that, why did you suffer him to take a wife?

The CAPTAIN.—Ah! why should I have prevented him from concluding an advantageous marriage?

The MARCHIONESS D'ARMINCOUR (in a rage).—Shocking calculation! (To M. de Lignolle): Cursed wit! I wish now your wife would cuckold you as many times as she has hairs upon her head.

The CAPTAIN.—Why, indeed, it is said she has fancied to do as much; but I shall cure her of that whim; I am returned to this country on purpose.

The MARCHIONESS (to the Captain).—And as for you, Mr. Bully, I wish that somebody (casting a look upon Mademoiselle de Brumont) of my acquaintance would run you through as many times as my niece is worth thousands *pér annum*!

The CAPTAIN (in a menacing tone, and with a sneer).—Tell me, my good woman, tell me the name of that acquaintance of yours!

The MARCHIONESS.—Good woman!—his name!—his name!—Go, go, perhaps you will know his name but too soon.

The CAPTAIN.—By G—d! we shall see—At any rate, brother, be on your guard—read that article of a letter that I found on my return to Brest: You told me that your brother never could consummate his marriage—I do not remember having said so, but it does not signify, let us go on: How then does it happen that your sister-in-law is pregnant?

ROSAMBERT.—She is not.

The CAPTAIN.—I am glad to hear it.—(To his brother): The letter is signed Saint-Leon, a friend of mine, you know. Boiling with rage, I took post-horses, and on my arrival alighted at Saint-Leon's; he told me he had never written. I showed him the paper, and he proved it was not his handwriting, but some one had tried to imitate it.

The BARONESS (low, to Mademoiselle de Brumont).—I apprehend this is a perfidious trick of your Madame de B—. (To the Captain): Show me that letter—(as she returns it): If you are a rational man, I shall ask you

what credit you can give to the inculpations of a forger?

THE CAPTAIN.—Very well! very well! I condescend to believe it is not the exact truth; but there is no smoke without a fire.—I intend to stop here for a few days; and let me see a coxcomb come near her! may a hundred-thousand bombs crush me, if I don't cut off the puppy's ears.

MADemoiselle DE BRUMONT.—Captain, your name has reached me; unfortunately, you have made it too famous. Thirsty tiger, when you cannot quench upon the English the thirst that devours you, you drink the blood of your brethren. France, it is well known, has not a more renowned duellist than you are; think, however, that there still remain in the kingdom some brave young men, who, although they don't make it a trade unceasingly to massacre, are not the less capable of fighting, and, perhaps, of punishing you. If I were in the place of the Countess, I would try, at least; determined by your menaces, I would this very evening take a lover—declare him to be so, and would choose in preference the weakest, perhaps.

ROSAMBERT (with enthusiasm).—No! the youngest, but the most formidable; a handsome young man, of a prodigious strength, extreme dexterity, and uncommon intrepidity; and I, who am speaking to you, madam, would forfeit my life, if, on the contrary, this champion did not bring you the Captain's ears, if you asked him for them.

The BARONESS.—But you would not ask for them, would you, Countess? You would seek no other revenge for the threats of a Hector than the contempt which they deserve.

The CAPTAIN.—What is the opinion of insignificant women to me! however, I shall take up my quarters here.

The COUNTESS.—In this hotel? No, by no means.

The CAPTAIN.—How so! am I refused an apartment in your house, brother?

The COUNTESS.—Most undoubtedly, I never will have you as an inmate.

The CAPTAIN (to the Count).—You don't answer me! why don't you bid her hold her tongue? Ah! you suffer yourself to be led by a woman! Blood and flesh! I wish I were in your place only for four-and-twenty-hours,

the husband of a scold, I would teach her manners. (To the Countess): Be easy! be easy! don't be angry! I shall not stop here in spite of you, but I will take lodgings in the same street—and rely upon it, I will watch you, princess. Rest assured, it will be no fault of mine if you succeed in becoming a little strumpet.

At this last outrage of the captain, the Countess fell in a rage, and returned no other answer, than by throwing at his head a candlestick that happened to be within her reach. I saw the moment when the brute would have returned the compliment. With my left hand I stopped his uplifted arm, and with my right seizing the giant by the collar, I pushed him back so violently, that he tumbled at the further extremity of the room against the window sash, which he broke. Had it not been for the balcony, down he would have gone into the yard.

Well done! my dear Brumont, cried out the Marchioness: you must kill him! let us murder the villain who frightens me to death, who insults my child, and offers to beat her!

I needed not being encouraged by the Marchioness; I was so transported with anger, that

having perceived on an arm-chair M. de Lignolle's sword, which he had left there on the preceding night when he undressed, I ran to seize it. Rosambert, who alone preserved some *sang-froid* in the midst of so scandalous a scene, ran up to me: Rash youth, said he, if you draw it, you will be detected!

Meanwhile the captain, seated on the fragments of the window sash, was looking at me with astonishment, gazed upon himself with surprise, and with a coarse laugh, said: It is this young wench, however, who, at one blow has brought me here! what an iron arm, or am I no longer but a man of straw? Odds bodikins! what it is to be taken unawares! a child could beat you! but that sword which she offered to draw against me! what must I have taken for my defence, miss? A black pin? (he then thought he must get up.) Adieu, fair ladies; adieu, my poor brother, adieu, my lovely little sister; I shall remember the kind reception I have met from you. I am not going far, and will keep a watchful eye over your conduct. Let me alone for that! he went away.

Sir, said Madame de Lignolle to her husband, it is you that I admire; your tranquillity

gives me pleasure! You would have suffered me to be murdered, without even rising from your chair!

He answered, with a pre-occupied air: Yes, yes!—what do you please to say? I beg your pardon; my body was here, and my mind elsewhere. I meditate the plan of a new poem; this will be composed of eight lines; nay, perhaps I shall write a dozen; and, since the doctor affirms that the equilibrium will not be re-established, I wish to justify the encomiums which he bestows upon my—genius, as he says! I will have this work be a little masterpiece, as he declares the others are! and I leave you, to forward the poem without relaxation.

When he was gone, we lost a few minutes in looking at one another in silence; each of us surprised, perhaps, at the present, and uneasy about the future events, was mentally engaged in anticipating various circumstances, to be able to act accordingly.

Madame de Fonrose was the first who opened her mouth to recommend great prudence. The Marchioness exclaimed, that it was requisite the Chevalier would never see her niece again. The niece protested she would rather die than



give me up: and I, by a look replete with love, assured my Eleanor of my unalterable constancy: I besides swore that her rude brother-in-law should soon give me satisfaction for the gross language he had addressed her in, and the inquietude he had dared to create.

That, said Rosambert, who spoke last, is a very irrational determination: for the sake of common interest, my friend, you must dissemble your resentment against the Vicomte; only wait for the events. When Madame will be able no longer to conceal her situation, she then will reveal it to her husband; who, like so many more, will be obliged to put up with the case, and to claim the child as his own. The captain, I know, will make a rare noise; then, Faublas, you will come forward, you will go and whisper a word or two in the ear of the ill-bred navigator; and then I know there will be an end of the business.

Everyone having acknowledged that Rosambert's advice was a very prudent one, Madame d'Armincour, who sobbed aloud, thanked me for having protected her niece, begged of me to protect her at all times, and bade me to be gone, and never to return. Poor children! added she.

seeing that we also were shedding tears, your grief breaks my heart; but it must be so; it must, indispensably.—Ah! M. de Rosambert! wherefore was not this one her husband?—Come to-night, murmured my Eleanor in a low tone of voice, come at twelve, we have a thousand things to say to each other—come!—Yes, my sweet dear, I will.—At an early hour, because the Marchioness, who is going to the wedding of a relation, will not return to supper.

Notwithstanding the presence of her aunt, she rushed into my arms, pressed me to her bosom, loaded me with caresses, and even kissed with transport my feathers, handkerchief, sash, and gown, as if she were taking leave of my dress, as if she had guessed that she never was to see Mademoiselle de Brumont any more.

It was with great difficulty that we were parted. Ah, Madame la Baronne, stop with her at least for some time, and try to comfort her.—With all my heart! answered she: M. de Rosambert has his carriage, let him see you home; I shall meet you at the Baron's in an hour.

Here is one who deserves being pitied, said the Count to me, for she seems to feel for you

a real attachment.—Do you suppose, Rosambert, that I do not love her?—That is a good question! I know you love them all.—Oh! that one! it is with all my heart; I prefer her—— To Sophia!—To Sophia! no, not to Sophia!— To Madame de B—?—Yes, my friend!—So much the better! exclaimed he, so much the better for me; that avenges me: but so much the worse for the sweet child; for hence proceeds certainly the hatred which the Marchioness bears her.—The hatred?—Assuredly! do you think it can be any other than Madame de B— who wrote that pseudonymous letter to the Vicomte?—Ah, Rosambert! can you suspect her of a—— My friend, you repose too much confidence in that woman.—And you, my friend, mistrust her too much; be it as it may, I beg of you let us speak of something else.—Most willingly, for I wish to impart a piece of news that will surprise you; and excite your laughter: I am to be married to-morrow.—And you want me to wonder at that? Now that your convalescence is indubitable, it is clear that you will get married every day.—Don't you think that I am joking, it is in good earnest that I am to be married.—In good earnest?—

Yes, before the altar. Impossible! it has not been heard of!—Yet it has been spoken of this fortnight. My word of honour has been exacted that I would mention it to no one, indiscriminately; the grand-parents, who dread the opposition of the rest of the family, have insisted upon the most profound secrecy being kept, and have even procured a dispensation of banns. My mother also recommended me to be silent on the subject, through fear that this advantageous marriage should fail on account of some indiscretion.—I cannot recover from my surprise. What! Rosambert, at the age of twenty-three, has been able to determine.—It could not be otherwise. First of all, it was the Countess de —, you know, the confidant of Madame de B.—Yes.—It is she who has undertaken the business with a zeal—but under whatever pretence she has strove to cover her extreme interest, I did not mistake her real motives; it was not difficult for me to be made sensible that she did it less to oblige me than to vex her former friend: and, in that respect, I confess that she could not feel better inclined than I was myself; besides, the Marchioness has pressed me.—The Marchioness?—Oh! when-

ever one speaks of a Marchioness he always thinks it is of his. No, Chevalier, this one is not over head and ears in love with you; she is the Marchioness of Rosambert. The Marchioness has pressed, requested, intreated me; she has even wept. Who can withstand the tears of a mother? I therefore suffered myself to be persuaded; the marriage contract is to be signed this evening; to-morrow I shall marry sixty thousand livres per annum, and a pretty girl.—Pretty?—Yes, indeed, with the look of a simpleton, however, and innocent! so as to make one's sides ready to split with laughter.—Her age?—Not quite fifteen. Oh, that is a complete education! the direction whereof I shall take the charge myself.—Her name?—You will know after to-morrow: come at an early hour after to-morrow morning, and without any further ceremony, you will breakfast with the new bride. Do you like those faces of the morrow? Do you like to see a new bride rather impeded in her walk, with beaten eyes, and her still astonished looks?—You laugh?—I do, you put me in mind of somebody—He is right; indeed I am a wonderful fellow! Here I am trying hard to describe what he knows

more of than I do! Are not those looks and airs of the morrow familiar to him? Has he not seen the charming de Lignolle, and the beautiful Sophia? And so many more, whom, perhaps, he has never mentioned to me! But it does not signify, Chevalier, you may perhaps relish a new kind of pleasure, make interesting observations, and account to yourself of what you will feel near an Agnes newly married, whose secret aches, and charming embarrassed looks, Faublas this once will not have occasioned.—Your ideas, my dear Rosambert, are truly those of an arch libertine.—Don't play the child; no vain excuse; I myself shall be a gainer by it; shall I not likewise have my enjoyments? Shall I not be still more intoxicated with the happiness that another will envy me—will envy to no purpose? I am well acquainted with the little inconveniences of hymen; I am not ignorant of the most inevitable of all, especially when one has the honour of being the intimate friend of the Chevalier de Faublas; but this once, illustrious hero, do not congratulate yourself in advance upon a new conquest. I hope, and I tell you so with confidence, I expect I shall never become an additional mem-

ber of the universal fraternity.—Well done! here is another exception; and it is Rosambert—Rosambert, who, on the day preceding his marriage, already holds out the language of husbands in general. He must not have forgotten, however, how many times the blind obstinacy of those gentlemen has supplied him with matter for his keenest sarcasms. All, in general, own that there is not one among them but who is one, yet each in particular will affirm that he is not one! and you too, Rosambert, you too.—Faublas, listen to me, and tell me yourself whether I have not some reasons to expect a different destiny! When an aged bachelor, satiated with pleasure, exhausted by former good fortunes, disgusted with the world that he teases, and with the sex that deserts him; when an old bachelor, enlightened by the constant experience of past times, and of the present age, dares, nevertheless, to brave at once the present age and times to come; when marrying a young wife, he impertinently challenges us to make him what so many others have been made by him, that calls aloud for vengeance: in a similar case, the throng of bachelors ought to unite, in order to punish the braggart. But

I, who have scarcely entered my spring, who am courted by the world, whom the fair sex caress: I, who will deny my wife no kind of enjoyment—Enough, Rosambert, say no more, I beg of you; you occasion me too great a surprise. Hymen must be most powerfully prepossessing thus to obscure the best judgment. I don't know you again! you are so strangely altered, that if my sorrows were not so great I would laugh at you.—Indeed?—I must take care of myself, you fill me with terror—come then—well! I am not already resigned; I submit, in advance, like a man of honour; I promise, whatever may happen, always to be found to be myself—yes, if the young woman's heart is ever engaged, I can assure you, that unless she carries on her intrigue in a shocking awkward manner, I will never notice it. I believe it is not possible better to repair one's wrongs. Chevalier, is not that a good beginning! you are at full liberty.—Me! Rosambert? may everyone, as much as Faublas, respect your happy bonds! Those maxims that I have been repeating just now are yours; I never entertained the like; I never have been a seducer; I have always been allured; the Marchioness



was my first attachment; Sophia is my only passion; Madame de Lignolle will be my last love.—May God hear you, and keep you from it!

Rosambert had some business to attend to; we alighted at his house, had a conversation that lasted about two hours, yet the time appeared to me very short, as the Count allowed me to speak unceasingly of my Eleanor. At length I was taken home. Madame de Fonrose was leaving my father's apartment when I entered it. The Baron looked highly animated; the Baroness was pale and trembling: Well, exclaimed she, with an ill-disguised spite, we shall try to overcome the chagrin which that loss must create, though it is enough to turn one's brains. Is it you, fair miss? hand me to the carriage.—Chevalier, if you should see your cruel Marchioness soon, tell her, sir, that I will ruin her, though I were to ruin myself.

When I had changed my female accoutrements, M. de Belcour and I sat down to dinner, although neither of us had an appetite.—Father, you don't eat?—I am unwell, from inquietude and chagrin—but you don't eat a morsel yourself—I have got my head-ache.—Your

sick head-ache! I advise you to give it up: it will not succeed this time; my son, read the last paragraph of this letter, which I received the other day by the two-penny post:

“I believe it is advisable to inform you that Mademoiselle de Brumont has spent the last night at Madame de Lignolle’s, and that it is the Baroness de Fonrose who has taken her there again.”

An anonymous letter, father?—True, my son; but would you presume to say the account it gives is untrue? My son, I forbid your going out at night in future; and Madame de Fonrose, added he, in a much altered tone of voice, Madame de Fonrose shall no longer abuse my confidence; the ungrateful Baroness shall never betray me more! I am a man, my dear son, and consequently liable to error. Sometimes I deviate from the right path; but as soon as I discover my mistake, I step back, and take another road. My dear friend, pursued he, taking both my hands between his, do you wish to copy only my foibles? Had not I foretold that you would finally ruin her, that

so unfortunate and so charming a child?—Who? Sophia?—No, Madame de Lignolle.—Madame de Lignolle?—Since she is pregnant; since henceforth her husband cannot believe—what is to be done to save her?—Oh, don't mention it! I have been endeavouring all the morning to find out some means of rescuing her from the dangers with which she is threatened. In vain have I tortured my imagination! I am beyond myself!—Her brother-in-law is arrived; you have already had a terrible scene together; my son, do you know the captain?—I have heard of his fame.—Do you know that his fame is tremendous?—Tremendous! I am told it is.—Do you know that the Vicomte de Lignolle has often hit Saint-Georges?—Often! be it so.—Do you know that that man has fought two-hundred times, perhaps?—So much the worse for him.—That he has never been wounded?—He is not invulnerable, however, in all probability.—That he has reduced many a father to despair.—Monsieur le Baron, so far you have not been reduced yourself.—That his fatal sword has mowed down many and many a promising youth.—Ah, father! an obscure youth, perhaps, is only wanted to avenge them

all.—My son, the Captain cannot fail being informed soon that Mademoiselle de Brumont is Madame de Lignolle's lover. I confess he will discover with greater difficulty that Mademoiselle de Brumont is the Chevalier Faublas; soon or late, however, we have reason to believe that he will find it out. My son, what will you do then?—What will be requisite! But permit me to observe, sir, yours is a strange——God forbid! exclaimed he; God forbid I should wish to insult your youthful courage! I confess even, added he, embracing me, that the proud simplicity of your manners has given me extreme pleasure; I likewise am sometimes proud, but it is of my son; it is upon my son that I have rested all my pride. You cannot imagine what my raptures were when I saw you, scarcely in the prime of adolescence, have no equal in any of your exercises; at one time bringing back, covered with froth, and broken with fatigue, a fiery steed, which the most famous horsemen were afraid of crossing; at another, with your firelock, bow, or pistols, bring down, at the first shot, the very bird which all the other sportsmen had missed; sometimes in a public assault, in the presence

of a crowd of wondering young spectators, beat or disarm all the fencing masters in the newly-arrived regiment. Every one then, adjudging the prize to the young Chevalier, would congratulate me upon having such a son. Yet I thought within myself, with a kind of impatience, and not without some sort of inquietude, that your superiority would not be well consecrated, until an event, always fatal, had compelled you to undergo a last ordeal, too commonly attended with regret; a trial, for the success of which, without courage, skill is of no avail.

You have gone through that ordeal too soon; but I am not afraid of saying, that upon the occasion, you behaved more than well. If his anger had less blinded him, M. de B—, who enjoys some reputation as a swordsman, might have admired you at la porte Maillot, when, with marvellous dexterity, uncommon *sang-froid*, mastering your antagonist's weapon, as if the question had been still merely to receive a hit with a foil, you displayed in that fight, become unequal, as much ability as strength, as much true valour as magnanimity. Then, indeed, I conceived the opinion that Faublas, as

intrepid as he was skilful, would never be conquered. Astonished then at seeing in a youth of sixteen, the reunion of an uncommon talent, and of a qualification still more rare, your happy father, in the excess of his joy, recollected that he had taken upon himself the charge of superintending your education, and could not contemplate his work without some feeling of pride. Then also, continued M. de Belcour, embracing me again, I reproached myself for having waited the event to do justice to the most deserving of sons; and you, Faublas, pardon my first apprehensions; if it were a crime not to have credited in advance virtues that had not yet been evinced to me, you see I am punished in consequence; believe me, I was less tormented formerly, lest you should be destitute of them, than I am now by the certainty that you are possessed of them in a superior degree. Yes, my friend, it is the excess of your courage, and your generosity, which at present occasion me the liveliest alarms. Permit me to demand of you several favours.—Favours?—I beg of you not to go to your enemy; I beg of you to wait till he comes to fetch you, and then you will do your duty. Nevertheless, I en-

treat you to agree to the fight, but upon this express condition, that each of you will be allowed to bring a witness. I wish to see your second affair, more dangerous than the first; I wish, by my presence, to oblige you to return conqueror. Faublas, beware of sparing the Vicomte de Lignolle in the magnanimous manner you did the Marquis de B—; I shall remember it long, your generosity nearly cost me my son. You would not get off with a mere bruise, when opposed to the Vicomte; every wound inflicted by the Captain has proved mortal; and, I repeat it to you, he is a man still more ferocious than he is formidable, a professional duellist. If his valour had not sometimes been useful to government, he long since, for public vengeance, would have lost his head on the block. His existence evinces the unhappy forgetfulness of the wisest of our laws. Think of it, Faublas, when the moment of fighting him is come, then, I conjure you! think of your father, of your sister, of your Sophia, of Madame de Lignolle, if it must be so. Then, for your own safety, for the good of all, for the tardy satisfaction of a hundred families, immolate the victim, whose blood heaven calls

for. He, you know, must receive death who delights in dealing in it; strike without mercy, strike, purge the earth of a monster, and your youth will not have been totally useless to the repose of mankind.

But, exclaimed M. de Belcour, a reflection truly perplexing has just occurred. For a too long time back travels, diseases, and various accidents, have compelled you entirely to neglect your exercises. It is now seven months, upwards of seven months, since you have handled a foil. Gracious God! if you had lost some of that prodigious agility which was admired, and which habit alone can entertain! If your eye was not so quick, your motions so sure! My stars! if you were only a second-rate man! Let us try together, let us try directly. You are not hungry, nor I neither.—Where are your foils? Pray give me one! if it were only to quiet me. I beg of you, my good friend, make haste, give me one. I thank you!—I sincerely regret I am not able to oppose a resistance equal to the attack; but at least I shall defend myself as well as I can. I am ready, I am on guard, go—that is not it! my son, that is not it! you spare me! Faublas, I order you to dis-



play all your powers.—You insist upon it! father, now for it then.

In two minutes time he parried twenty thrusts, and received thirty. Very well, exclaimed he, perfectly well! better than formerly; indeed, I think so. Yes! more pliancy still, more vigour, more rapidity! It is lightning, it is thunder! Never, continued he, passing his hand several times over his breast, never have you hit me with so much force, never have your hits hurt——no, caused me so much pleasure!—Now do me another service; take your pistols, go down into the garden, and shoot at a few birds. I beseech you do!—I was going to obey, but he called me back. I cannot impart too soon a news that will overwhelm you with joy. On Saturday, without any further delay, we shall set off to try to find out Sophia.—Sophia? Saturday! That, as you say, is a delightful piece of news!—Go into the garden, my friend, go.

I did go down, not to disturb the innocent birds in their amours, but to think of mine. We shall go on Saturday! we shall go in search of and to meet Sophia; what a happiness!—But what am I saying? what will become of

Madame de Lignolle? to leave my Eleanor! to desert her now! in five days hence! unhappy Faublas!

I hurried into my father's apartment: do not expect it, sir, said I, do not expect it! Would you have me, with equal perfidy and cowardice, leave Paris, when the captain is come to fetch me? Shall I forsake the mother of my child at the moment when her enemies muster around her? Do not expect it, sir! I protest it shall not be.

My father was so stupefied, that he could not answer me: and I, without waiting until recovering from his surprise, he would explain his intentions, ran to my room, where I locked myself up to write.

"My dear Eleanor, my charming dear, I am grieved beyond expression: we are not to meet this evening. My father is apprised of everything; your aunt must know more about us than you imagine; Madame d'Armincour is the only who could have sent to M. de Belcour the fatal intelligence which deprives us of a delicious night. Alas! it is true, then, that everybody combines against two lovers! It is true

then, that everybody by conjuring your ruin, presumes to attack me in the dearest half of myself! Be easy, however, do not fret, Faublas remains yours, Faublas adores you; whatever may happen, your lover will sooner forfeit his life than forsake you."

"BEAUTEOUS MAMMA.—Have I given you offence by some new act of giddiness? It is now eighteen long killing days that I have been deprived of the happiness of seeing you. Ah! pardon me if I am guilty; and if I am not, deign to acknowledge your wrongs, and to repair them: appoint an hour for my meeting you to-morrow. My fair mamma, you have promised me advice, friendship, assistance, protection, that is all I claim. My father wishes to take me with him in the course of five days, to go and fetch Sophia, and at present, I must dread, above all things, that departure, which not long since was the object of my most ardent desire. Could not you, my beautiful mamma, who knew how to remedy every accident, find a remedy for this one? I intreat you, on so difficult a conjuncture, not to leave me to myself, I request you will not refuse me

for to-morrow your advice, which I promise you to abide by.

"I am with the most lively gratitude, the most tender friendship, and with the most profound respect, etc."

Here Jasmin! Go quick to la Fleur, and to Madame de Montdesir. Put on a plain coat, use your ordinary precautions and observe on the road, whether you are not followed by anyone!

Sir, said he on his return, Madame de Montdesir——Madame de Montdesir! Madame de Montdesir? Let me hear of la Fleur, first?—You then wish me to begin at the end? I bring no news from la Fleur, sir. I had just delivered your note to him, when he said to me: Jasmin, are you fond of a good caning? Not I, faith, replied I. Well! my friend, resumed he, do you see in the coffee-room facing the hotel that officer, as high as an Egyptian pyramid? He has a cross look, returned I. Well, my good friend, resumed he again, I believe he has been casting one of his cross looks at you. Run away full speed, if

you wish not to expose my mistress, and your own shoulders. I then, sir, returned no other answer; but without waiting for further advice, took to my heels, and here I am.—So that, thanks to your cowardice, I have no news from Madame de Lignolle.—Sir, I could not have brought you more, although that big devil had broken every bone in my skin.—Thither you must return though.—Yes, in the evening, the giant, perhaps, will not be there then.—And Madame de Montdesir?—She recommended me to assure you, that she felt severely for not being honoured with a visit from you: that, however, she was going to forward your letter directly, as it had been expected some days since, and that you would have an answer to-morrow morning.

This answer, in fact, came at an early hour, but it was not written by Madame de Montdesir.

“Yes, I shall prevent that departure; but was not I right to say that Sophia was less dear to you? In the interim, since you manifest the desire, we may meet at seven in the evening, you know where.”

I called my servant; come, Jasmin, keep up your courage! If it had not failed you yesterday, you might have joined la Fleur; go then this morning to see whether the captain is still at his post.

He was there already. My good Jasmin, who, piqued at my reproaches, had just ventured a little further than on the preceding day, had escaped the cudgelling of the captain only by a prompt retreat. I now became conscious that unless my man was powerfully encouraged, my errand would never be completed. I accordingly had my indefatigable courier to eat a copious dinner, and, when he had got stuffed with fresh courage, he resolutely departed upon his new errand, more ill-fated than all the former ones. My poor Jasmin returned, bruised from head to foot.—This time, sir, I got as far as the yard, but the big devil on a sudden came up to me. He cried out: What do you want?—I answered: I don't want you, sir. He hallooed again: You shall not come in! what do you want?—I then replied, speaking as loud as I possibly could: Why would you prevent my coming in? Are you the Swiss? He then cried out again—no, he did not cry

out, he contented himself for the moment by giving me a fisty-cuff, that made me see thirty thousand burning candles. And it was I who cried out, and well I did so, for if la Fleur and his fellow-servants had not come to rescue me from the grip of the brute, and turn me out of doors, I believe I never could have left the place.

What a fury! what insolence!—Sir, interrupted Jasmin, I did not hesitate telling him that my master would not in the least feel satisfied for the treatment.—What did he answer?—’Twas me who answered, sir, he only cried out. He then cried out, while striking at me again and again: Your Master! what is your master’s name? Will you tell me his name?—You have concealed it from him?—Yes, sir, and so I would though he were to have killed me on the spot!—Well! I shall go myself this minute, and tell him my name.—Go, exclaimed Jasmin, who saw me take up my sword, and lay that fellow down sprawling as you did that M. de B—, another braggart.

I hastened down stairs, but fortunately met M. de Belcour half-way, who stopped me.—Faublas, where are you going with your sword?

—How! he has dared to stop my servant and to strike him.—So then, my son, answered he with great *sang-froid*, you are in greater haste to avenge your servant than you were to avenge your mistress; thus it is that, to obtain redress for a personal outrage, Madame de Lignolle's lover hurries to expose and to ruin her!

These just representations calmed me directly, I called Jasmin to bid him take away my sword. The Baron, who saw that I was preparing to go out, said to me: No, go up into your room, I am going there myself, I want to speak to you.—We are both, my friend, in want of diversion; we cannot procure one sweeter than the company of your sister. I have just sent for Adelaide, and intend to keep her here till Friday evening.—Why not longer? —We are to go on Saturday.

M. de Belcour observed my countenance whilst returning that answer. As the hour approached, at which I was to go and learn what Madame de B— proposed doing to prevent my departure, I determined to avoid the explanation the Baron wished for. I was satisfied with replying: Saturday—yes—Saturday. Adieu, father.—Stop; your sister will be here in a



quarter of an hour.—I am obliged to go out, father.—My son, I will not have you go out—I must absolutely go, father.—I tell you I will not have you leave your home: I am determined you should stop here.—I can assure you that a most indispensable affair—My son, would you wish to disobey me?—If I cannot do otherwise, father!—I understand you, sir! therefore shall use force. At these words, he left my room, and locked me in.

You will use force? and I dexterity! I opened the window, it was only one story high; I jumped. The shock was violent; I nevertheless crossed the yard as quick as lightning, and running all the way, soon reached Madame de Fonrose's.

Unhappy young man, said she, what has brought you here? The captain has familiarly paid me his dreadful visit this morning. He asked me, in that polite tone which you know to be his, who a certain Mademoiselle de Brumont was, whose assiduities at Madame de Lignolle's gave rise about the world to many jokes and pleasantries. I have been at no little trouble to make that dreadful brother-in-law comprehend that I had nothing to do with the conduct

of his sister; that I was by no means bound to account to him for my doings, and that he would oblige very much if he were pleased never to set his foot again on my premises.—Have you seen my Eleanor?—Quite on the contrary, I have just sent her a note to recommend her being very circumspect, and above all things to beware coming hither. I was just, with much regret, going to have the same precaution recommended to you. Neither do I wish to detain you at present; for I confess that I dread some new assault from that pirate, who is come very unseasonably to annoy us.—Chevalier, are you now returning home?—No, why do you ask me?—I would have desired you to tell—A moment!—stop another moment.

She rang the bell, a servant answered it, and she gave him secret orders. I paid but very little attention then to that fatal circumstance, which I have often recollected since.

I wished to beg of you, resumed she—but you will be time enough in the evening for that commission, to tell the Baron a thousand obliging things from me; for although our intimacy has ceased—Has it?—For life. It is that perfidious Madame de B— however, who

causes all our present troubles.—Can you imagine that the Marchioness has been capable of writing that letter to my father?—I do, and that to the Vicomte de Lignolle too.—Impossible! I cannot.—Just as you please, sir, answered she dryly. For my part, permit me not to question it, and to act in consequence.—Adieu, Madame la Baronne.—I don't bid you adieu, Monsieur le Chevalier.

Was it the critical situation in which we all stood, that caused me false terrors? As I was going from the Hotel de Fonrose to the petite-maison, rue du Bac, it appeared to me that I was followed by somebody.

I did not wait long for the Vicomte. Beauteous Mamma, you wear the same dress you had on at Saint Cloud. I always see it—With some pleasure? interrupted she.—With transport. It unceasingly puts me in mind of—Of what we must not remember.—Ah! of what I will never forget so long as I live! tell me, why, for upwards of a fortnight have you so cruelly deprived me—I waited till at last you would write to me; I don't wish to become quite troublesome.—Troublesome! can you ever—What do I know? I see you so prepossessed in

behalf of the Countess! Madame de Lignolle has so much wit! so many charms.—It is true that—You must find the company of all other women very insipid?—I find a thousand pleasures in the company of the most amiable of them all!—Yes, the most amiable! next to Sophia, next to the Countess! Chevalier, believe me, let us leave compliments aside—rather tell me of your troubles.

The Marchioness listened to me constantly with the greatest attention, but often apparently sad, and sometimes seemingly embarrassed. Nevertheless, when I concluded the long narrative of my sorrows and inquietudes, I could not help saying to her: What exasperates me is, that they presume to charge you with having written those two cruel letters.—They presume! who are they?—M. de Rosambert! Madame de Fonrose!—My two most mortal enemies!—Though they were your friends, I would not take their word! dear mamma, how will you prevent my departure?—She replied in a pre-occupied tone, I cannot be tired of repeating it; Sophia must be less dear to you.—Less dear! I assure you it is not so; but my stay in Paris is indispensable; both honour and love com-

mand it.—Your love for Madame de Lignolle! yes.—My dearest mamma, how will you prevent my departure?—Faublas, you are to receive from Versailles a packet, the contents of which, I hope, will give you pleasure, and probably induce M. de Belcour to alter his plan. If, however, your father would insist upon taking you with him, let me know of it immediately.—This packet is?—You will receive it to-morrow morning; I shall leave you till that time with your curious impatience.—Yet you do not assure me that this first mode you have used to assist me must be infallible? Why, but, mamma, you don't hear me, you are thinking of something else.—Yes, exclaimed she, rousing from her deep reverie, you must be much enamoured with the Countess!—Ah! much—More than you love me—than you did love me, I meant to say. Why—I don't know—I can't—Come, more! your uncertainty, your embarrassed air evince it. More! repeated she mournfully—It is true that my Eleanor has acquired rights that no other—but I chagrin you, fair mamma—Not in the least, why should I feel chagrined at your preferring your mistress to your friend? But you have

not said all; how has she acquired rights that no other—She is pregnant.—Cruel young man! exclaimed she with infinite vivacity; it is my fault, if—

Madame de B— did not finish her sentence. She prevented my falling at her knees; and for fear of hearing my reply, stopped my mouth with her hand, which however I kissed. At length the Marchioness, whose looks I could observe to grow tender at the same time that her complexion grew animated, rose to go away.—Do you wish to leave me already?—I am compelled to do so, answered she, stealing away from my caresses. I am forced to go! my time is not my own! I have many affairs to attend to just at present. Farewell, Chevalier.—Since you forbid my detaining you, farewell, dear mamma.—When she was at the bottom of the stairs: See, said she, with tears in her eyes, the ingrate does not merely enquire on what day he is to come and thank me!—Ah! pardon me! I was thinking—Of anything else, no doubt!—Of quite another thing, it is true, but of you, nevertheless. On what day, dear mamma? On what day?—This is Tuesday—well, on Friday—yes, on Friday I shall be able to spare

a moment.—At the same hour?—Perhaps a little later. At the close of the evening it will be more prudent.

I only left the house a quarter of an hour after the Vicomte, and yet I thought I could see again, at no great distance from me, the troublesome Argus who had already caused me some uneasiness. What confirmed my suspicions was to see the spy, either a novice in the profession, or actuated by fear, alter his course when he perceived that I was making towards him. I returned home, fully persuaded that it would not be long before the Captain would pay me a visit.

Is it possible, said the Baron to me, you should have run the risk at least of breaking one of your legs?—Father, I would have ventured my life! wherefore, Monsieur le Baron, will you bring me to such extremities as may become fatal? You are not ignorant sir, that situated as I am, death to me is preferable to slavery. Prior to my surrendering to your authority, I am come positively to declare that to place any restraint upon my liberty is to attempt my life. What! numberless dangers threaten an unfortunate defenceless young wo-

man, the woman the most deserving of my tenderest affections! and you, the most cruel of her enemies, pretend to rob her of her only consolation, her only support! you pretend, by reducing me to entire immobility, to deliver her within the hands of her persecutors, and oblige me to witness their preparing her ruin without opposing any obstacle to their heinous designs. If you should further intend, sir, if you have any means left of locking me up in my room, and compel me to live there, I announce to you that then, and I swear by my sister, by you, by Sophia, by all that I hold in this world dearest and most sacred, I swear that no consideration whatever will induce me to defend, against the Vicomte, a life which your tyranny will have rendered useless in future to Madame de Lingolle, and odious to her lover! Now determine my destiny; it is at your option.

He would do as he says, exclaimed my sister; whenever the question is a female, he no longer knows us; he, however, could not commit a greater fault than to suffer himself to be killed. Don't lock him up, father; ah, I beg of you, pray, do not lock him up.

Whilst Adelaide was addressing him in this



style, the Baron kept his sorrowful eyes upon me alone. Alas! I saw the eyes of my father filled with tears; my sister was already kissing the hands of M. de Belcour, before whom I hastily kneeled—Father! ah, father! pity your son; on account of his misfortune, forgive what he has been saying to you, and the tone in which the words were spoken; have mercy upon the most impetuous of all men, the most miserable of lovers; think, sir, above all things, that unless he were driven to despair, Faublas would never resist your so dear authority, your orders ever sacred.

M. de Belcour hid his face in his hands and meditated long his answer. At last he said: Promise, my son, to go neither to the Countess's—Impossible! father.—Nor to the Baroness's, nor to the Captain's.—I agree to that—Neither to the Baroness's, nor to the Captain's. I give you my word of honour, and may I never be called by your name if I do not keep my word. Neither to the Baroness's, nor to the Captain's, that is all that I can promise. My father returned me no answer; but from that moment I recovered my full liberty.

Immediately after supper, I went up into

my room, and called Jasmin. Give me my round hat, cloak, and sword.—So then, sir, I see that notwithstanding the advice of M. le Baron, you are of my opinion. You believe it is proper as soon as possible, to rid me of that big devil, who deals such ponderous fisty-cuffs, and you are right; and your father would say as much as I do, if, like me, he had received——Hold your tongue, Jasmin, I am not going to the Captain's, my man——Without too much curiosity, sir——I wish myself to try to go and speak to la Fleur. Don't go to bed, wait for me.—How so! sir, don't you take me with you!—That's a good one! you are a coward! hear me: I may meet the big devil, and you would be frightened.—No, not in your company, sir. Now that I see you by the side of me, I could challenge a whole taproom. The big devil, perhaps, has a valet. If so, I engage to give a good drubbing to the servant, while you dispatch the master.—I am delighted with your good spirits, and in consequence will take you with me.—What are you about, Jasmin? I was thinking, that if perchance the servant had a sword, I don't know how to use such weapons—Either leave your stick behind, or

stop here.—I prefer following you, and will trust to my arms alone.

This determination of my servant proved very serviceable to me, as will be seen presently. We were just gone out, and as I was in a hurry, I walked very fast, and by long strides, without looking around. We had just reached the street Saint-Honoré, when a female stopped Jasmin to ask him the way to the place Vendôme. Hearing the accents of a cherished voice, I turned round: Great God! is it possible? yes, it is her! it is the Countess!—How happy! it is him! I was going to your house, Faublas.—And I, my Eleanor, was going to yours.—Lay hold of this, quick, relieve me, continued she, giving me a little box; my jewels are in here. I was carrying them to you, and was coming to join you, that we might set off directly.—Set off! where shall we go?—Wherever you like.—How so! wherever I like! To be sure! to Spain, England, Italy, China, Japan, to some desert; where you think fit, I tell you.—Are you in earnest? I have nothing ready for the execution of so bold a project.—Nothing ready! what is it you want.—My dear love, this is not a proper place to discourse upon a subject

of so great an importance; you were going to my house? well, my Eleanor, come along with me, I shall take you there; let us enjoy some more happy hours.—However——What! However! Would you be sorry to grant me another happy night? It would give me great pleasure, on the contrary; but I think you had better carry me away without loss of time.—Jasmin, run to the Swiss, ask him for the key of the back door of the garden, and open it for us. Mind we are not to be seen by anyone. You will give two louis d'ors to the Swiss, for keeping my secret.—I am not worth the money, sir.—I promise to give him as much.—Oh! your word is as good as hard cash for him.—I promise you the same, Jasmin; but run.

The back door was soon opened, and without being seen, we reached my apartment.—How satisfied I am! exclaimed the Countess, as she entered my room, how satisfied I am! Now it is that I am really his wife! How well we should be here! but we shall be still better in a cottage.—Faublas, we must elope together, we absolutely must. Let me relate to you this day's adventures. The captain came at an early hour in the morning to abuse me. He

hastened to apprise M. de Lignolle of my being pregnant, and that Mademoiselle de Brumont could be no other than a man in disguise. He then took his oath that he would very soon know him, and do his business for him, (I repeat his very words) that he would do the business of the insolent fellow, who presumed to love his sister-in-law; (it was not the word love which he spoke) and who had the audacity to lay his hand upon him.—What did your husband say to that?—My husband! why will you call him my husband; you know he is no husband of mine.—M. de Lignolle?—He did not seem to be much pleased.—What did you answer?—I replied, that if it were possible that Mademoiselle de Brumont should be a man, it was my kind stars that had allowed it to be so; and that, if ever a friend had come to me, and done what my husband should have done, my supposed husband deserved it amply. My aunt exclaimed that I was right; the good old lady sided with me.—I don't doubt it!—When the two brothers were gone, the Marchioness wept bitterly: she wanted to take me back with her to Franche-Comté. Think how dear you are to me! I constantly rejected her proposition.

Faublas, I had rather be carried away by you. Meanwhile, the rude captain went to take a seat in a coffee-room.—I know.—I thought I had better not send to you, as I don't wish you to fight the captain; I forgive his insults; I forget them; I shall forget the whole world, provided you carry me away.—I was going, however, to write to Madame de Fonrose, when she sent me word.—I know.—You see, the Baroness is not a good woman! she has served us so long as our amours appeared to her an intrigue more ludicrous than another, and procured her some amusement: now that we are surrounded with danger, she forsakes us. But what do I care, since you remain faithful, and that I am going to elope with you. Night at last came on, I hastened to get my supper, and to have my aunt retire into her apartment. My women put me to bed as usual; but as soon as they had left my room, quick I put on this gown, and going down the little staircase, got into the yard. La Fleur, as if I had sent him on an errand, called to the Swiss to open the street-door, I ran away, met you, and nothing prevents your carrying me away.—Nothing prevents it! say you: quite the reverse, every-

thing opposes it! We are in want of a carriage, a disguise, arms, post-horses, and a passport.—Ah! dear me! I shall not be carried away this night! Hear me, Faublas, we shall stop here till daybreak; you then will hide me in some garret of your hotel; you will have the whole day to make the necessary preparations, and we shall finally take our departure towards the middle of to-morrow night.—Impossible, my dear.—Impossible! for what reason?—You will not consider, that by acting too precipitately in the execution of so difficult an enterprise, we are liable to miscarry.—Only think! I always find out the means of succeeding, and he sees only the obstacles!—You have it still in your power, for three months to come to conceal your pregnancy, and to deny your being in that situation.—The ungrateful man will not carry me away unless he be obliged so to do.—The case is not so pressing.—Wherefore postpone for three months that happiness which we may obtain directly?—Would you, my Eleanor, who are so tender hearted, unless necessity made it a law, enjoy a happiness, which would reduce to despair, the most feeling of all sisters, and the best of fathers!—Miser-

able me! He will not carry me away! He is determined I shall not elope with him.—My beloved, I give you my word that those considerations, though ever so powerful, will not stop me when the day of sacrificing them to you is come. Then I swear, that though I were to perish myself, I will forsake neither my child, nor his mother, whom I adore. But allow me to leave as late as possible those objects, the most deserving of sharing with you my affections: permit me, when I forsake them to follow you, to carry with me the consoling idea, that I have not voluntarily occasioned their greatest sorrows.

The Countess, being obliged to renounce her sweetest hopes, wept bitterly; her grief was so poignant that at first I apprehended not being able to calm it! but what cannot the caresses of a lover perform? The present night, like the last, we spent together in amorous embraces, and it seemed to last but one moment. It will soon be light, said Madame de Lignolle, and I shall ask you, in my turn, how I shall return home? The question was rather puzzling. I was obliged to weigh the matter in my mind before I could give a satisfactory answer: My



Eleanor, let us make haste to dress; notwithstanding the prudent advice of Madame de Fonrose, I shall take you to her door, without going in myself; the Baroness will think that you called upon her at so early an hour only that you might speak to her about me. You will not find it a very hard task to make your lover the topic of conversation; and notwithstanding all that she may say to you, you will keep her company till such time as your gig arrives.—My gig! who is to bring it to me?—La Fleur, to whom I shall go with proper instructions.—But if the Captain was already at his post?—Let us make haste; he certainly will not be there as early as at the rising of the sun. At any rate, if he should, I have got my sword; it cannot be helped, my sweet dear, we have no other means left! But when and how shall I see you again?—Eleanor, I will not have you expose and endanger yourself so late at night alone! on foot! I will not suffer it! Tell me, my beloved, is it not more proper and less dangerous that I should go to you? Can't I sometimes, about midnight, gain admittance to you?—Madame de Lignolle kissed me! yes, answered she, with an exclamation of joy; I

can contrive means—come—not next night; I might not have adopted proper measures—hear me, not to trust to chance, come on Friday, between eleven and twelve.

It began to be light. We got downstairs without causing any disturbance, and made our exit through the garden door. We succeeded better than I had expected. I saw the Countess enter Madame de Fonrose's house; ran to M. de Lignolle's to call up la Fleur, who was to depart a quarter of an hour after. I then returned safe home, and at eight o'clock received the following letter:

“For a long time, Monsieur le Chevalier, I have been seeking an opportunity of repairing my wrongs towards you and Monsieur le Baron. It is with transport I have seized the first which offered. I beg you will tell your father so. I believe, however, that the king could not make for the regiment of —— a better acquisition than that of a young man like you, since it is certain that you are bearer of the most promising physiognomy in the world.

“I have the honour to be, etc.,

“LE MARQUIS DE B——.”

M. de Belcour entered my room a moment after; he held several papers in his hand, and I could see the greatest joy depicted in his countenance.

I received it this very minute from Versailles! exclaimed he, embracing me; you have wished it were addressed to me, you have been desirous I should be the first to congratulate you on your good fortune; I feel extremely flattered by so delicate an attention. Yes, that is the very thing, added he, seeing that I was approaching to read it; it is your commission of a captain in the regiment of — dragoons, now quartered at Nancy; and this is the order to join on the first of May—in a fortnight.

Faublas! I have reproached you more than once for the inexcusable inactivity which rendered your talents useless, and I had determined to take at last the necessary measures to procure the only situation that you were fit for: and I am delighted that upon your having made a prior application, you have been so successful. It has been your good fortune to be granted at first, what my most pressing solicitations would not have obtained immediately, namely, a superior rank, and the expectation of

a certain promotion. Unfortunately, I have occasion to apprehend you will find in this favourable event another subject of joy; the project of our journey is done away with; your stay in the metropolis is prolonged a whole week. If it be true, however, that you congratulate yourself upon the occasion, think at least, my son, that nothing will dispense your obeying the minister's orders, and joining your regiment in less than a fortnight. I shall then leave Paris, to proceed alone whither we intended going together.—How kind you are, sir, and how grateful I am!—I promise to search for Sophia with as much care and zeal as you could have done yourself.—And you will find her, father!—you will find her!—I hope, at least, I shall, on account of this late event. I don't doubt but Faublas will be eager to justify the favour of the prince. I doubt not but he will fill with distinction the honourable post that has been committed to his charge. It is to be imagined that M. du Portail will hear, in his solitary retreat, of this happy change, which is the forerunner of many more, and that he then will no longer conceal his daughter from a husband who is become deserving of her.

—Oh, father! oh! what an encouragement you hold out to me!

Adelaide is already up, Faublas; she is to breakfast in my apartment; I was going to have you called down. I have not been so indiscreet as to show these papers to your sister; it is but fair you should inform her of the happy news: come, my dear, let us go down together.

I was receiving Adelaide's congratulations, when my servant came, with an alarmed countenance, to tell me that I was wanted.—Who wants me, Jasmin?—It is him, sir.—Who is him?—The big devil—The big devil! repeated M. de Belcour, looking at Jasmin. What is that expression? Faublas! whom does he mean?—Father, I—I am going to receive him.—Wherefore all this mystery?—gracious heaven!—perhaps it is the captain?—no, Faublas, stop; let him come in here. Jasmin, desire the Vicomte to step into my apartment.

As soon as my servant had left us, the Baron exclaimed: The fatal moment is now come! O my good friend! remember the prayers which your father has addressed you, and that he reiterates on his knees. He had really knelt be-

fore me. I immediately raised him up; he seized my right hand, kissed it, and placed it upon his heart: Let it save me! exclaimed he, let it save the half of my existence! Adelaide came running, and quite terrified: Faublas, said M. de Belcour, kiss your sister, and do not forget her.

I was embracing her, when the captain entered the room: I see two! exclaimed he with a dreadful sneer, which is Mademoiselle de Brumont? I replied, pointing to my sister: Captain, this one, the day before yesterday, could not have seated you on the Countess's balcony.

Meanwhile, Adelaide was stooping to whisper to the Baron: How ugly that tall gentleman is! I am frightened at him! Leave us, child, answered he, go and take a walk in the garden. Prior to her obeying, she came to me, with her eyes bathed in tears: Brother, said she, the Baron did not lock you in!—oh! I beg of you, remember he has not locked you in!

When my sister was gone, the Captain, who had not ceased staring at me, exclaimed in a most violent manner: Is this the Chevalier de Faublas who is spoken of? How can he have

acquired a name in feats of arms? He hardly looks to have any life in him! Though he be something more than a weak female, he is but half a man still for all that!—Captain, please to be seated; you will be more at your ease then to look at me.—Zounds! I believe you wish to be thought jocular! Don't you know me? Are you ignorant that the Vicomte de Lignolle never puts up with the stupid raillery, nor the impertinent airs of your species?—that he never has suffered an equivocal look or gesture? that the most haughty have renounced their audacity in his presence?—that he has, with great facility, immolated men more famous than you are, and who had a more formidable appearance.—You have no more to say? Captain, is it customary with brave men of your description to try to intimidate the antagonist whom they apprehend not being able to conquer? I am very glad to inform you that you could derive no great resource with me from that excellent method.

Hell and fire! cried out the angry Captain. He, however, checked his wrath; and, taking me by the hand, said: Hark! since it was possible that there should be found under the

canopy of heaven a youthful madman so rash as to disgrace a brother whom I love, and so daring as to lift up his hand against me, and to insult me openly, I had rather it is you than anyone else. Too often, for two or three years back, I have been stunned with your name; let me tell you that for strength and science I acknowledge but one single man in the whole world who can be compared to me; and that one's superiority I don't think anyone will dispute. I will never allow any other man's fame to rise above, or even to counterbalance mine; and I intended coming to Paris some day to tell you so.—Return thanks to chance then, which, by making me apparently an offender, spares you the infamy of a duel, the sole motive whereof would have been your ferocious love of false glory.—I am very impatient to know how you will maintain the boldness of your discourse; the more I look at you the less I can credit your being deserving of your high renown.—Let us come to the point then, Captain. It is proof you want, is it not?—Assuredly! but tell me, would you perchance wish to boast of challenging the Vicomte de Lignolle?—Why should I boast? What honour could I derive from it?



Besides, have I ever made a trade of challenging anyone?—I must let you know that I have taken my solemn oath, upon all occasions, to propose the fight—I have taken no other oath than never to refuse it.—Well, then, choose your weapons.—I have no preference.—The sword, then! the sword, I like to see my enemy from a short distance.—I shall endeavour, Captain, not to stand too far from him.—That we shall see, my little gentleman. The spot?—I don't care which; at la Porte Maillot, if you like.—La Porte Maillot? Be it so; but this time you will not have the Marquis de B—to deal with.—Perhaps.—On which day, and at what o'clock?—To-day, and immediately.—Those are the best words you have spoken, exclaimed he, tapping my shoulder, let us begone.—Captain, you have got your carriage, I suppose?—No; I always walk.—This once, however, you must make up your mind to take a seat in the Baron's coach.—Why so?—Because we must go and fetch one of your friends.—One of my friends?—Yes, as I propose taking a witness with me.—A witness! where is he?—There he is.—Your father?—My father.—Let him come if he pleases; but he must not rely

upon my showing you mercy.—Monsieur le Vicomte, replied the Baron with great composure, the more I hear you, the more I am persuaded you are undeserving of mine.—Captain, have you heard him?—Well, what then?—What then? exclaimed I, laying hold of his hand, which I squeezed very hard, it is the sentence of death that he has been passing on you! Let us go, repeated my father, and I see that we shall return soon.

We first went for M. de Saint-Léon, a colleague of the captain, another naval officer, as tractable and as polite as his friend was the reverse. This gentleman's testimonies of respect to my father, and civilities to me, sufficiently counteracted the invectives, bravadoes, and swearing, which M. de Lignolle uttered without interruption: several times even he attempted some conciliatory speeches, but it may be easily imagined that all manner of mediation was now superfluous between the Vicomte and me. We arrived at the Porte Maillot, each of us determined to die rather than to relent.

We had just got out of the carriage; my antagonist was going to draw his sword; and mine

was already drawn; when, on a sudden, several horsemen, who, for a few seconds had followed us full gallop, surrounded the captain, crying out in the king's name. One of them said to him: M. le Vicomte de Lignolle, the King and the Lord Marshals of France command you to deliver your sword into my hands; and till I receive fresh orders, I am to accompany you where you go.—The captain flew in a rage, yet he did not dare to offer any resistance. As he surrendered his sword, he cried out to me: They have not appointed a guard over you; they rely on your peaceable disposition. You have very prudent friends; return them thanks for their extreme vigilance, it will allow you to live a few days longer, but only a few days. Understand well what I say to you.

I returned with my father; and as we passed Rosambert's door, I recollected that my happy friend had been married on the preceding day, and that I was to breakfast with the new Countess. I left the Baron, and was introduced to the Count, who received me in his drawing-room.—Rosambert, I am come to wish you joy, and to attend to your invitation.—I beg your pardon, replied he, you will breakfast

with me alone; the Countess is fatigued, and wants rest.—I understand. You are satisfied with your night?—I am; yes, satisfied indeed.—My friend, what do you laugh at? Your gaiety does not appear to be natural! What can disturb?—A foul trick, which is played me by your Marchioness, I would lay a bet now!—What is it?—I have just received an order to join my regiment.—To join! so have I.—And you too! how so?—I am now a captain of dragoons.—A captain! I wish you joy! let us embrace. There will not be a younger, a braver, or a handsomer officer in the regiment. So then, at last, the Marchioness has taken it into her head to do something for you?—Did not I tell you, long since, that a man, whatever his merits might be, could never expect preferment but from the recommendation of women?—I admire you! Who told you it was Madame de B—? I confess it would be more pleasant still if it were her husband.

I returned him no answer. I had thought proper not to communicate the Marquis's letter to M. de Belcour; judge then whether I felt inclined to show it to Rosambert!

Captain in a regiment of dragoons! con-

tinued the Count; that is no bad beginning! Oh! you may expect high promotion! it is Madame de B— who patronises you! How is it possible, however, I can't conceive, that the Marchioness could summon courage enough to sacrifice herself that you might get the commission? the courage of confining Faublas in a garrison? Where is your regiment quartered, Chevalier?—At Nancy.—At Nancy! Stop a minute! Am I mistaken? No, no! Ah! I don't wonder.—At what?—At what! that's a good one! You perhaps do not know what I mean?—Indeed I have not the least idea!—Faublas, those out-of-the-way mysteries are more injurious than beneficial. How would you have me be acquainted with that?—With what that?—Why, that Madame de B— possesses, in the vicinity of the capital of Lorraine, a very fine estate, which it is a long time since she has seen.—Ah! ah!—She undoubtedly expects to go and spend the fine season there; and, whenever you please, you will obtain from your colonel leave of absence for a whole day; so that the Marchioness, at the summit of her wishes, will enjoy your company at her ease, without dreading a rival being in her way.

She has fixed upon the best plan to prevent at once your going in search of Sophia or assisting Madame de Lignolle.—Prevent me from assisting Eleanor?—Certainly, for you are ordered to join your regiment within a short time.—Not before the first day of May.—Well! that is only a fortnight.—I am a whole week a gainer, since my father was to take me away on Saturday next.—A great good done, faith! what change can a single week produce?—What do I know? So many things will happen in less time! Faublas, that is what I call adopting a mere probability as a real fact.—Keep silent, my good friend, say no more to remove an illusion which supports me.—Will Madame de Lignolle be less miserable for your leaving her a week later!—Rosambert! Rosambert! is it when I am near the bottom of the abyss that you should point it out to me?—Will she be less exposed to the vengeance of her enemies?—Cruel man!—To the brutal anger of the captain?—He came to me this morning. We were on the point of fighting, when a garde de la connétablie arrived to part us.—A guard! to him? You have not one attached to you?—No—I believe so; that would have im-

peded your going, incognito, to visit the Marchioness.—The Marchioness! by hearing you, one would suppose that nothing in the world is done but through her interference.—My friend, it is because the lion, which, during some weeks, seemed to be fast asleep, has just awoke; because I see Madame de B— now stirring everything round her; a week ago, bad rumours respecting Mademoiselle de Brumont began to circulate.—Oh, dear!—Much about the same time, a fatal letter is addressed to the captain.—Is it possible!—Yesterday I heard from good authority, of the rupture between M. de Belcour and the Baroness; you receive your commission to-day; and I am obliged to go, without being favoured, like you, with a fortnight's respite! I must be at my regiment on the 21st of this month, of course I must bid you adieu the day after to-morrow; on Friday! But what does she aim at by adopting such measures? for the artifice woman never attempts anything without some secret designs. If I am not allowed to guess at everything, I conceive at least, that ready to strike the decisive blows, but hearing of our reconciliation, and unable to refuse acknowledging that the

man in the world who knows her best, must feel disposed to assist you against her with his purse, his advice, and even with his arm, if absolutely requisite: the Marchioness deems it very advisable, as soon as possible, to remove that among her enemies whom she considers the most dangerous, because he is your best friend. Be it as it may, your Madame de B— is a true woman, to the whole extent of the expression, for after beating her enemies, she still bears them malice; and, pursued he, as he rubbed his hand over his forehead, recently, quite recently, prior to the order for my exile, I thought I perceived that the pistol shot with which she gratified me, would not prevent her playing me every now and then some little tricks of another sort.—How so?—Yes, I have not left my home since yesterday evening, and I could lay a bet that a sincere reconciliation has taken place between the Marchioness and Madame de —, the eternally officious Countess! who has so zealously pressed my happy marriage.—Upon my honour I don't comprehend your meaning.—So much the better: When I happen to be indiscreet, I like to be found equally obscure.—You wish to go, my good friend? I shall



not try to detain you, for I confess I want to be left by myself for a moment.—You seem to be out of spirits?—Rather so.—The order of your departure?—That, and something else.—Which I am not to be told of?—Or that it is not worth being known.—What is it?—A trifle! nothing! less than nothing! I have been told so a hundred times, and never would believe it, for it is difficult for the best tempered man not to be ruffled a little. Yet it can't be helped! It is a cloud that will soon pass away.—Rosambert, you speak like an oracle; I shall call again when you will cease being unintelligible. Farewell!—Adieu, Faublas!—I hope, at least, that you will present my duty to your new bride, and assure her of my regret.—Oh, yes! you will see her this evening; I shall introduce her to you.—What a giddy chap I am! I was going away without asking you what her maiden name was.—De Mésanges, answered he.—De Mésanges! exclaimed I.—Well! what do you wonder at?—Nothing.—You were struck when you heard the name?—Struck——because I have known, in the country, a brother of that young lady.—She has no brother.—It must have been one of her cousins then. Adieu,

my friend!—No, Chevalier, no! hear me! when you knew that ~~HE~~ cousin, did not you perchance know that ~~SHE~~ cousin also?—Never, wherefore?—Ah! for—for nothing. Faublas, I claim your indulgence, for I am extremely stupid to-day.

I made off in all the haste I could, that Rosambert might not perceive on my countenance too much gaiety succeeding to too much surprise.

My father was waiting for me with great impatience. As I entered his apartment, I heard him say to my dear Adelaide: Ah! my sweet child! if it were so, would you see me so quiet? Come in, cried he as soon as he saw me, your sister is miserable; she pretends that you have met with some great misfortune, which I conceal from her. Oh! brother, exclaimed she, I should have died if you had not returned. When, then, will you give up fighting for any other, than Sophia?

Apropos, interrupted the Baron, I never thought of asking the question but when you were out of the way. Tell me, pray, what is become of M. du Portail's letter?—I had kept it, sir, but have lost it at Montargis, on the

evening I was taken ill. It is most likely Madame de Lignolle who has found it; but I have not dared to speak to her about it: what I wonder at is that she never mentioned anything concerning it to me.

On that same evening, Rosambert brought his wife to us. From one end of the apartment to the other, the Countess recognising my sister, although she had never seen her before, stopped quite amazed. Go on, said her husband, proceed, what detains you at this door? Why, answered she, still looking at my sister, 'tis because methinks that's her.—Who?—Who? Why a lady that I thought was my dear friend.—Do you know this young lady?

During this short dialogue, I was enquiring of myself what I had to do to prevent the young bride from betraying herself openly. To quit the room for a while would be exposing my sister to dangerous questions, to embarrassing reproaches from the Countess, to whom, besides, I should soon procure a new subject of astonishment, since I could not dispense returning into the drawing-room. It was therefore incumbent upon me to hasten obliging Madame de Rosambert to notice me, that she might be

put in mind of the necessary explanations and prudent advice, which, on the eve of her nuptials, Madame d'Armincour has probably given to the innocent Mademoiselle de Mésanges. Having fixed upon this as the best plan, I threw myself in her way, and bowed most respectfully to her.

The Countess then screamed out, dropped her arms, lost all countenance, and very near fainting away, was obliged to lean against the door. Meanwhile she ceased not casting her looks sometimes upon my sister, sometimes upon me; I could easily perceive that she was still at a loss to find out which of the two was her dear friend. This, said Rosambert, is a true recognisance! very singular! quite theatrical! but it appears to me that in this scene, very entertaining in other respects, mine is by no means the best part.

My father, on his side, would mutter to himself: Here are more quiproquos! another amorous adventure! I could lay a wager. So you know this young lady? resumed the Count, showing my sister to his wife. This latter very unseasonably wishing to act cunningly, answered: Ah! dear me, no; not I—I never knew

**Mademoiselle de Brumont.**—De Brumont! repeated Rosambert; cursed be then the infernal genius that made you guess at the name! So then, continued he, beating his forehead, I can entertain no further doubt, no doubt whatever! I am already what is called a husband, a true husband! I am so! I even was so before I were married. How it was achieved, perhaps I shall hear at some future period. My father stooped to whisper in the Count's ear that my sister being present, he should not speak so freely.—You are right, sir, replied the Count, I am inexcusable, totally inexcusable to make such a bustle about a mere nonsense. Yes, indeed, though one may be ever so prepared, one cannot receive the blow without feeling a little hurt. I am not void of courage, or fortitude; I only beg of you a moment to recover myself; you will see me presently perfectly tranquil. it is to be confessed, however, that this young man can boast of being born under a most malignant constellation, favourable to himself, but fatal to all who are near him! It seems as if it were written above, that not one of his friends is to escape. He could not help asking other questions of the poor little woman. Ma-

dam, you have seen this young lady nowhere?—Nowhere? oh! indeed I have not, not even at my cousin de Lignolle's.—Ah! how mad thus to ask questions when—when one is certain! Very well! Madame la Comtesse, very well! that is enough; the Chevalier will tell me the remainder.

At these words, the Count seemed to be reconciled to his case. The conversation now ran upon indifferent subjects. The new bride, who spoke little, looked at me without interruption; and with an air that seemed to announce that if she was still astonished and dissatisfied at the manner in which I had entertained her error by availing myself of her ignorance, she notwithstanding did not feel disposed to keep eternally against me her surprise and resentment. Rosambert, during that time, was struggling very hard to conceal the inquietude which the attention bestowed upon me inspired him with; and as the Countess finally burst out laughing, he asked what she laughed at?—Why! I laugh because he laughs.—And wherefore, does he laugh?—Why! he laughs, perhaps, at——ah! but that is what I can't tell. Why! I don't know what he laughs at.

In vain did the Count attempt to suppress a sign of impatience; in vain did he try to stifle a deep sigh; and since Rosambert's vanity prompted him to endeavour to conceal the mortification which his misadventure occasioned him, he thought it was time for him to withdraw. Adieu, said he to me; I am not angry with you; will you be at home to-morrow in the evening?—Yes, my friend.—You may expect to see me.—Shall I come with you? asked his wife.—What a question you are asking, replied he, in a tone of perfect indifference, just as you please. I nevertheless shall observe to you that young married women do not visit bachelors so, especially every day.

As the Countess was going downstairs, I presented her my hand; she squeezed mine and said: I would come most willingly. Do you know though that I am very angry with you! you have played me a sad trick?—Hush! hush! cried out Rosambert; those things are not to be spoken of in company, especially when the husband is present.

They both went away. On the day following, at six in the evening, Rosambert came to see me, but he did not bring the Countess with

him. Upon his entering my room, I was surprised at his loud burst of laughter: The whole is truly comical! exclaimed he, infinitely pleasant!—What!—What the Countess has been relating to me.—Have you seen Madame de Lignolle?—No, my wife; she has recounted to me the whole transaction, I tell you; I kept a serious air in her presence, for the sake of decorum; now that I am with you, permit me to laugh. You are born for comical adventures.—Rosambert, if you wish me to answer you, be explicit.—Ah! this time I speak plain; but if you force me to it, I shall speak plainer still.—Just as you please.—Will you have it so? Well then, hear me: my wife told me that prior to her being my wife, she had been yours.—That is not true!—What! it is you who deny it! it is you!—I interrupted him bluntly: Monsieur le Comte, I beg you will hear me before you continue with your insidious confidences. All your questions upon so delicate a subject, in whatever manner you may venture to ask them, would be entirely useless; if the fact is false, I am not such a vain coxcomb as to excuse your wife; and if it were true, I am not so stupidly indiscreet as to confess it to her



husband.—But I ask of you neither to own or disown; but merely to listen. Madame de Rosambert has related to me that you have had the happiness of going to bed with the Dowager d'Armincour; that on the same night you left the bed of the Marchioness to go and have some chat with Mademoiselle de Mésanges, who had soon ceased being a demoiselle, though without knowing it, since after having behaved with her like an honorable man, you nevertheless left her in the full persuasion of your being a female. You must acknowledge, Chevalier, that if the young person has been telling me a story of her own composition, she has made it ludicrous enough, and allow me to laugh at it.—Rosambert, far from opposing, I wish to join you in the laugh.—However, resumed he, with a more serious air, I have a question to ask you—without meaning to give the least offence—Let us suppose—it is a mere supposition, you understand me well?—Let us suppose that the adventure had fallen to your lot, would you have entrusted Madame de B— with the confidence?—Never.—I thought as much. Who then can have told her of it? for my marriage, it is not to be doubted, is a benefit from the Marchioness;

and as I was telling you yesterday morning, because the discoveries I had made on the preceeding night had suggested the idea, it was only at Madame de B—'s instigation that the Countess de B—, who appeared to me so devoted and zealous, had been acting all the while.

At the very moment when I was granting an ample dowry for the virginity\* of Mademoiselle de Mésanges, who most assuredly had no claim of the kind, the belligerent powers announced publicly that their rupture had been simulated, and that it was M. de Rosambert who paid the expenses of the war. However, I am forced to acknowledge, that the Marchioness avenges herself in a noble manner; when she nearly maimed me, she stood the chance of receiving a shot herself. Now that she has had bestowed upon me as a maiden, a complete widow, she takes care to gild the pill; she adds to it, to console me, sixty thousand livres per annum. Chevalier, when you see my generous enemy, I beg you will return her my best thanks. Tell

\* The wisest jurisconsults define dowry: Pretium defloratæ virginitatis. I wish to introduce erudition also in this work, that it may be found to contain a little of everything.

her that at first I was not quite exempt, from feeling the little misfortune, by means of a foolish hymen, of being ranked with the throng; yet do me justice: add that my weakness lasted only one moment; that I now am entirely reconciled to the event. Do not, above all things omit assuring the Marchioness that, notwithstanding my own accident, I feel more disposed than ever to make game of unlucky husbands. Faublas, are you coming with me?—Whither are you going? I see you quite superb! in full dress! your sword by your side! Are you already paying your marriage visits?—No, but since I must be off to-morrow, I am going to take leave of my friends and acquaintances.—And you wish me to accompany you?—I am to sup in the faubourg Saint-Honoré; we shall alight at the Champs-Elysées; take a few turns up and down; and have some conversation.—I agree; provided we speak only of Madame de Lignolle.—With all my heart. So then now I am a husband like a hundred thousand others; but it does not signify, I still side with young bachelors against married men.—Faublas, I just think of it, don't take it into your head that I wish to carry you with me to prevent

your going wherever love might summon you.—What do you mean?—If you had made a new conquest, if you had an appointment with a new young bride, already tired with her husband, don't let me prevent you!—Rosambert, if you really thought it were possible, you would not speak of it so jocosely.—Upon my honour, I spoke in earnest. Adversity has just been trying my strength; I feel capable of enduring any calamity.

So then I am of opinion that the unfortunate Countess has no resource than to retire into her province, or demand a separation, in case M. de Lignolle should use her ill. It was getting dark, and we were in the Champs-Élysées, nearly facing M. de Beaujon's house, as Rosambert had spoken those last words. The Marquis de B— was just coming out of an adjacent hotel. As soon as he saw me he made up to me; but turned back upon seeing Rosambert. He avoids us, said the latter, let us go to him, and not suffer so good an opportunity of letting an agreeable moment escape us. In vain did I endeavour to dissuade Rosambert: the decrees of fate are irrevocable.

You run away from us, Monsieur le Mar-

quis?—It is true at least, that I do not seek your company, replied he in a very dry tone.—It is true, at least, that many people have told me, that you complained highly of me; indeed I am equally very curious and very impatient, to hear from your own mouth, the cause of your resentment.—Do you think I will not tell you candidly my reasons? How do you do, M. le Chevalier, continued he, presenting me his hand; you must have received yesterday from Versailles.—His commission, interrupted Rosambert; he has received it.—I have received it, Monsieur le Marquis, and am very thankful for that proof of your—Here the Count interrupted me: Faublas, was it the Marquis who has obtained it for you?—Yes, it was. What is there in that to excite your laughter?—But pray, sir, has not your lady solicited likewise?—Why not? The Marchioness is an excellent woman, inclined to render service to everybody, to everyone, except you!—I must persevere in asking the reason why?—The reason? Monsieur le Comte, when a man thinks himself amiable to such a degree that no woman can resist him, and that he meets one prudent, virtuous, and who loves her husband tenderly.—

Pardon me, but I know so many of that description, that I am at a loss to know who you are speaking of.—Of mine, sir.—Of your own! of yours!—Yes, when he meets with such a one, he miscarries.—He miscarries!—to be sure he must.—Then he must take patience.—You speak very much at your ease, you who never miscarry.—No unreasonable jokes, Monsieur le Comte, I know that you have been more successful than I have with a young lady.—A young lady? Ah! yes, with Mademoiselle du Portail.—Du Portail! grin as much as you please! to be avenged at least; I used no foul dealings.—Ah! spare me. But speak plain. What do you call foul dealings?—Your behaviour to my wife, sir.—Well, sir.—Well, sir, what have I done to your wife? Let us hear if you know of it.—If I know of it! the day next to that on which Mademoiselle de Faublas had slept in the Marchioness's bed.—Mademoiselle de Faublas! are you sure?

I drew nearer to Rosambert, and whispered to him; take care, my friend, you carry the joke too far; but I request of you at least not to expose Madame de B—. The Marquis however, went on; in order to be avenged, on the

day following you brought to my wife the brother, dressed in his sister's clothes.—See what a cunning fellow I am, exclaimed the Comte, with a loud laugh: what a deal of mischief I have been contriving against the Marchioness! such are the tricks I will play though! only see.—I believe, interrupted with great vehemence M. de B— who visibly grew animated, I believe, indeed, he presumes to make game of me! not satisfied with that first act of perfidy.—Why! when I once begin.—You have, moreover, been so wicked.—Zooks! this becomes serious!—Very serious! but I question who will have the last laugh, M. de Rosambert; for let me tell you, I don't like to be turned into ridicule.—Nor I to be threatened, sir; but out with the wickedness, as you call it.—Yes! you have been so wicked as to avail yourself of the presence of a young man in disguise, to behave to my wife, even in my presence, in the most impertinent, most shocking manner.—Oh! I acknowledge it now, I am a—wretch!—a true demon!—an abominable rake!—Crack your jokes, sir; you are welcome! but as you have demanded an explanation, and instead of confessing your errors you will carry them to an

extreme, let me tell you what I think of your conduct towards the Marchioness; I deem it unworthy of a man of honour; and added he, laying his hand on his sword, I expect you will give me immediate satisfaction.—Why truly! this is more comical still! and although many people may wonder at it, I confess that I expected as much.

Gentlemen, exclaimed I, what are you about? I cannot allow you to fight, Monsieur le Marquis!—and you Rosambert, who abominate quarrels, is it possible that in your frolicsome humour—

Always! vociferated M. de B—, I have always read in his physiognomy that he was a bad hand at cracking a joke.—Bad? you provoke me!—Yet I could not have thought that he was so wicked a man.—This will do better! the saying is more noble.—I must give him a good lesson that will tend to correct him.—He is angry! quite angry with me! Indeed, M. le Marquis, you are no longer the same man. For my part I had always read in your countenance—except, however, one certain morning when at la Porte Maillot you wanted to kill the Chevalier and the Baron! and the Comte! and every-



body!—except on that morning, I had read in your countenance that you were the meekest and most pacific of all mortals.

At these words, pronounced in the most ironical tone, M. de B— transported with anger, unsheathed his sword. Warned by I know not what fatal presentiment, I could not refrain feeling some emotion at the sight of that hostile weapon, of that avenging sword, which a moment after was to be crimsoned with the blood of Rosambert, and within a very short time subsequently, with a more precious blood still.

I grasped Rosambert: Monsieur le Marquis, I beseech you, be calm! Monsieur le Comte, you shall not fight! I will not suffer you to fight! Have done, Faublas, answered the latter I am sorry enough to be obliged to do it, but it was unavoidable. However, it will not be a duel, but a rencounter only, and I shall have learned from the gentleman an infinite number of pleasant anecdotes.—If you do not immediately draw, exclaimed M. de B—, quite beyond himself, I will publish everywhere that you are a coward; and before I do, I will cross your face.—Cross my face! repeated Rosambert. He then laughed again: it would be a

great pity! one could no longer read on my countenance the very wicked tricks that I indulge in playing to a prudent, virtuous woman, who loves her husband tenderly; don't I speak the truth, Monsieur le Marquis?

Rosambert, still laughing, disengaged himself from my arms, drew back a few paces, and then sword in hand, came up to M. de B—.

They fought vigorously for some minutes. Alas! how many misfortunes would have been spared me, if the Marquis had been conquered! it was the Count who fell. Heaven is just! cried out M. de B—, may all perish thus who offend me! all who bear a deceitful physiognomy. I shall send as soon as possible the necessary assistance, added he; stay near him—See now what a countenance is! what an alteration already in this man's.

He withdrew. The Count, extended on the ground, beckoned to me to stoop, that I might hear him, and said to me in a very weak tone of voice: My friend, I am severely wounded this time; I don't think I shall ever recover. Faublas, certify at least to Madame de B—, that previous to my breathing my last, I have sincerely repented my cruel proceedings to—

wards her——cruel! more so than you imagine——Faublas, it is too true that——Rosambert could say no more, he lost the use of his senses.

Several people who had heard a rumour of the fight, were come, and we were contriving to stop the blood of my unfortunate friend, when the surgeons arrived. He was carried home with the greatest speed. What a sight for his young bride! The wound was probed; but we obtained from the surgeons this perplexing answer only: We can say nothing until the third dressing is taken off.

I returned home, my imagination replete with sinister images: father, he is dying!—Who?—M. de Rosambert; he has been dangerously wounded by the Marquis.—The Marquis, replied the Baron, may he never wound anyone else! That is a sad event—and a fatal one, entirely so! it will bring back upon you the attention of the public. O my dear brother, said Adelaide to me, softening by her tender caresses, her reflection cruelly just; dearest brother, I cannot tell exactly what your conduct may be, but I am sensible that for some time past, you meet with nothing but misfortunes.

How long did that night appear to me which succeeded that fatal evening! What terrible dreams disturbed my painful slumbers! as soon as I closed my eyes, I only beheld objects of horror; naked swords suspended over my head! my vestments tinctured with blood! the skies in a blaze! I knew not what river overflowed, and carrying away, besides a thousand fragments, a corpse!—the images of death all around me! If I awoke, I felt my heart to be oppressed, a cold sweat was over my face; and in order to remove those dreadful sights, I strove to direct all my thoughts towards the happy day which was to illumine my existence, that Friday so impatiently waited for, which was to procure me some happy moments in the company of the Vicomte de Florville, and the liveliest pleasures in the arms of my Eleanor. But in vain would I attempt to soothe an imagination, struck with the most sinister presentiments, it rejected every consoling idea; my soul was profoundly comfortless. Alas! too soon did that Friday come, which seemed to promise me nothing but happiness! it came too soon, indeed, that dreadful day, followed by one more dreadful still.

At an early hour in the morning, I called at Rosambert's. The Count had had a very bad night. I returned in the afternoon: the first dressing had just been taken off, but it could not yet be ascertained whether the wound would not be mortal.

At seven in the evening, I left Rosambert to fly to the rue du Bac. I did not, as I expected, see there the Vicomte de Florville: it was Madame de B— whom I met with, Madame de B—, in all the eloquence of dress, as if she were going to Longchamps; how beauteous she looked.

In the first transports of my admiration, I threw myself at her feet; and the Marchioness, apparently beholding me in that posture with less pride than gratification, with a more gentle intoxication than that which self-love occasions, did not hurry me up.

Dear mamma, have not you acted very imprudently in coming here in so remarkable a costume?—Would it have been better for me not to come at all: I am just returned from Versailles in my whisky, with no other attendant than Després; besides it was already dark, and I did not get in from the rue du Bac.

—So there is a private back door then?—There is, my dear.

Permit me, beautiful mamma, to express my utmost gratitude. The papers which you had promised me—Have they provided the intended effect?—Yes: my father no longer thinks of undertaking a journey with me; yet there is still one circumstance, which I confess makes me uneasy! namely, my being obliged to leave Paris so soon. Is there no possibility of having my departure retarded for a few days?—On the contrary, exclaimed she, I am afraid you will receive an order to be off still sooner. A war is spoken of; most officers have already joined their regiments; and it was not without great difficulty that I obtained for you the delay of a fortnight.—Good God! how shall I manage to—She interrupted me hastily: you don't speak to me of the calamitous event that took place yesterday evening.—Do you deem it calamitous, mamma?—How can you ask me such a question? Was it from the hand of M. de B—, that Rosambert should have received his death blow? I shall then have endured with impunity the outrage of his calumnies, and the stain of his embrace! I shall not have

been allowed to force from him in your presence, with the tardy remorse of his last crime, the avowal of all his impostures!—Accuse not destiny. Your courage has been rewarded by the success of your fight at Compiègne; and in the rencounter of yesterday, all your expectations have been fulfilled.—Fulfilled!—Let me repeat what the Count said prior to losing the use of his senses: Faublas, certify at least to Madame de B—, that previous to my breathing my last, I have sincerely repented my cruel proceedings towards her—cruel! more so than you did imagine——Faublas, it is too true that——That? My lovely mamma, the Count was unable to proceed.—Unable to proceed! But Faublas, how did you interpret that involuntary omittance?—The sense does not appear to me equivocal.—What then?—I comprehended that he wished to confess that he had not possessed your person——your person with your love, I mean to say.—Confess! exclaimed she, taking both my hands between hers; you therefore believe it was I who spoke the truth to you?—I can assure you, mamma, it would hurt me most grievously not to be convinced of it.—She placed my hand upon her heart: you be-

lieve it, Faublas! my good friend! feel—feel its throbbing—for six months past, this is the only moment of joy that has fallen to my lot. Suffer, my dear friend, suffer my tears to flow. Those that I have shed for such a length of time were so bitter! These I find so sweet! Suffer my tears to run, they relieve me from a burthen that began to overpower me.—Ah! nevertheless, Faublas, what a greater happiness, if I myself had washed away my injuries in the blood of my enemy, and by this means had proved deserving to obtain in your own estimation, my complete restoration! What have I said, added she, placing her burning lips upon mine, what signifies my vengeance? Am I not fully justified! Have I not a proper claim upon your esteem, and am I not even entitled to a love equal to—Enraptured with her caresses, I was lavish of mine in return. Well, be it so! exclaimed she, yielding without reserve; let love at last, invincible love triumph! For two months back I have opposed all the resistance which a mortal can command. Twenty times it has forced my secret from me; let it triumph also over my resolutions! let it restore to me with my idolised



lover, some moments of supreme happiness! though I were to purchase them at the cost of several ages of trouble! though I were to hear an ingrate when in my arms, call Sophia, and regret Madame de Lignolle! though I were in short some day to lose my life!—

She said no more; I had just carried her on a bed, where our two souls were confounded into one. What an unforeseen catastrophe was near awaking us from our rapturous ecstasy, to cause the groans of rage and grief to succeed the tender sighs of love!

The door of the room in which we were, having suddenly been burst open: Will you believe it now, said Madame Fonrose to M. de B—.

The Marquis, unable to question any longer his unhappy lot, became enraged; sword in hand, he rushed upon a man unarmed, and who besides, surprised in the greatest disorder, was totally defenceless.

The Marchioness, too prompt, my too generous lover, ran to meet the threatening weapon. The Marquis struck the blow. Great God! Madame de B—, however, stood, at first, the violence of the thrust, and at the same instant

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pulling out of her pocket a brace of loaded pistols, she fired one at the Baroness. She then said to her husband: You have just attempted my life, yours is at my disposal; I shall not try to avenge my death, which undoubtedly is near; but, added she, leaning upon me, I declare to you that I am determined, against all, to save him.

Notwithstanding I made great efforts to hold her up, she fell on her knees, supported herself on her right hand, and presented me the pistol which she still held in her left: Lay hold of this, Faublas! and if you, M. de B—, offer to advance one step towards him, let him—stop you!

She had scarcely spoken these words, when she dropped backward into my arms, and lost the use of her senses.

The Marquis no longer thought to threaten my life; his fatal sword had already fallen from his hand. Unhappy wretch, cried he, with signs of the deepest despair, what have I been doing? Whither shall I go to hide myself? You who are present, do not forsake her; be lavish of your care and attention. How shall I get out of this place?

So great indeed was his agitation that he was scarcely able to find the door.

In the meanwhile, Madame de Fonrose, whose lower jaw was fractured, uttered horrid cries. Crowds of people, unknown to me, and whom I could hardly see, came running in. Several surgeons arrived. The Baroness was immediately carried home, but they did not dare to remove the unfortunate Marchioness. Four of us carried her, dying, where, some minutes before, oh, ye gods! avenging gods! if it is an act of vengeance, it is indeed a very cruel one!

The deep wound was in the left breast, close to the heart. Madame de B—, perhaps, was not to live till next morning. The first dressing being put on, she recovered the use of her senses.—Faublas! where is Faublas?—Here I am; here I am, overwhelmed with grief.—Madam, cried out the first surgeon, don't speak.—Though I were to die immediately, retorted she, I must speak to him; and in an extinct voice she stammered out these broken words: You will come again, my friend; you will not suffer indifferent people to close my eyes; you will hear my last confession, and my last

breathing. But leave me for a few minutes; run; the lettre de cachet no doubt will soon arrive from Versailles, run, save the unfortunate Countess, if there is still time enough.

I immediately started. I did not walk, I flew along the streets. They would wish to confine my Eleanor! They must take away my life first. But if the cruel order is executed already? If it should have been executed? It would be all over! I should have no resource! no hopes left! The Countess, equally impatient and enamoured, will not be able, were it only for a week, to support captivity and absence, the mother and child will perish! and I, miserable sufferer! must I be compelled to survive them? Who could prevent my following them to the grave?

I reached the hotel of Madame de Lignolle, my mind replete with those gloomy ideas! Without stopping at the lodge of the Swiss, I called out la Fleur, passed on, crossed the yard, flew up the private staircase, and knocked at the door of Mademoiselle de Brumont's apartment. It was opened in a trice. How happy! it was the Countess! an exclamation of joy es-



caped me, which she answered by one of the same kind: Are you come already, my beloved?—My dear Eleanor, I apprehended it was too late; come.—Where?—Come with me.—How so?—Make haste. They threaten your liberty!—My liberty? I should be deprived of the sight of my beloved!—What are you looking for?—My jewels!—They are at my house; you have not taken them away!—My aunt.—Where is she?—In the drawing-room!—Run to bid her adieu; but no, Madame d'Armincours would wish to take you with her; you must come with me. Besides, the Marchioness's charms might be conducive to our detection; it is better that for a short time she should not know what is become of you. However, be quick, let us make haste, we have not a moment to lose.

We went downstairs without making any noise. Favoured by the night, the Countess reached unperceived the street-door. I then, pulling my hat over my eyes, knocked at the Swiss's window: It is me, who have been speaking to la Fleur; please to pull the string. The man, engaged in a game of cards, obeyed mechanically.

Behold Madame de Lignolle in the street, I hasten to join her. My Eleanor lays hold of my arm, and quickens her pace as much as possible. We dare not speak a word, every new object on our way occasions us mortal inquietude; thus, tormented by a thousand apprehensions, but still supported by the sweetest hopes, we reached the place Vendome.

We entered the hotel at the garden door, and as we immediately got to the back stair-case, nobody could see us except Jasmin.

As soon as we had lights brought in; dear me; exclaimed Madame de Lignolle, there is blood about my hands! Faublas, yours are besmeared all over! I could not check a cry of horror, and on a sudden, melted into tears: this blood is the blood of a lover! In what a moment are you come to unite your destiny to mine? Eleanor, my dear Eleanor, keep strict watch! take care of yourself; I am surrounded by the persecutions of avenging heaven; death hovering around me, either strikes or threatens those objects that are dearest to my heart. Keep a strict watch! this blood is the blood of a lover.

What discourses you hold out, Faublas!

Whence proceeds your sad despair? You fill me with terror!—My dear, that blood is the blood of a lover. The Marchioness—Has stabbed herself?—No, her husband—Ah! the cruel man!—Although dying, she collected all her powers to warn me of the perils to which you were exposed.—How thankful I am!—And to request of me to return soon, that I might receive her last breath.—Poor woman! You must hurry to her, my dear; let me go with you.—Impossible! so many people who threaten you! so many people by her.—Well then, go by yourself, go and soothe her last moments.—However, do not stop with her long; Faublas, you will tell her that my hatred is entirely extinct—that I feel deeply afflicted at her hard fate; that I wish it was in my power—Yes, my Eleanor, I will tell her that you are possessed of an excellent heart.—But make haste to return, don't leave me here.—I shall be as quick as possible. Jasmin, as my father might take it into his head to come up into my apartment, take the Countess into the boudoir. Don't let M. de Belcour find her out! let no one see her. Jasmin, I trust you with the care of the Countess, I recommend her to your care,

you become answerable to me for her safety; remember that my existence is at stake.

From the place Vendome to the rue du Bac, it is but a stone's throw; and I returned to the Marchioness in a moment.

Several females, and one gentleman, surrounded her bed. Let everyone withdraw, said she, upon seeing me enter the room. The doctor represented to her that she must not speak: Let me have a last conversation with him, replied she; after that you may govern me as you think proper. Let all retire without exception! The physician wanted to say more, but an absolute order closed his lips.

Is she safe? my dear friend.—She is at my house.—Don't keep her there long. At any rate Després is just gone to Versailles, with my secret instructions: so long as I retain a breath of life, dread nothing more for the Countess.

Madame de B— observed for some time a gloomy silence; she then fixed upon me her eyes, full of tears; and having beckoned to me to lay hold of her hand: well, Faublas, said she, don't you wonder at my sad destiny? Some time back, at the village of Holrisse, you saw me extended on a bed of opprobrium; you behold

me now on my death bed, and the most cruel reverse, at the present as at a former period, has subverted all my projects at the moment appointed for their execution. I wish now as I did then, to lay my soul open before you; and when you have heard me, when you will know me thoroughly, when above all things, you will have compared my transient pleasures and durable tortures, my early weaknesses, and my last struggles, my good resolutions, and my blameable designs, finally, my errors and my punishment; when you have compared the whole, Faublas, then you will dare, I doubt not, to affirm that your lover, after having lived more unfortunate than guilty, has died still less deserving of blame than of compassion.

Wherefore should I recall here the commencement of our connection? At that period, it is true, your lover spent some very happy days; but how soon were they poisoned by the most poignant alarms so speedily followed by your inconstancy and my complete disaster! Ah! who would wish to purchase the like enjoyments at the same price? Who? I! Faublas, I, who notwithstanding my approaching dissolution, still feel burning with the fire that has

unceasingly consumed me! but in the whole world I am probably the only one. Believe me, I have not forgot your rising love for Sophia, the fatal period of her elopement, the still more fatal day on which I saw my lover with my rival before the altar, and the horrors of that night when, by the vilest of all attempts, your perfidious friend completed my disgrace, and paved the way to my real misfortunes.

Faublas, now at my last hour, I take my solemn oath, and call to witness the God who hears me, Rosambert has deserved death. Rosambert, prior to his degrading me in your opinion, had basely calumniated me. I avow that, seduced by some of his brilliant qualities, I paid more attention to him than to anyone else, showed him a marked preference, no doubt. He might well have conceived great hopes, though I have good reasons to believe that the event would never have justified them. Don't imagine, Faublas, that I mean speaking to you of my principles, my modesty, of all the virtues to which my sex have been wisely condemned: with you I have not kept even the appearance of them. What shall I say to you, my friend! placed by chance in an elevated

rank, I moreover had received from nature an uneasy mind, an ardent soul, perhaps I was born to obey the criminal dictates of ambition; but I saw you, I was allured, and plunged into all the extravagance of love.

Yes, it was by perpetrating a crime, that Rosambert annulled my designs at Luxembourg. Those designs, I know, might have appeared blameable: but at least they were not such as a lover void of liberality and of courage, a vulgar woman, moderately enamoured with an ordinary man, could have conceived. Rosambert subverted them all. It appeared to me that henceforth I was not allowed to produce to your embrace a woman who despised herself; and from that period presuming too much on my own strength, or rather still unacquainted with the irresistible empire of a passion, thinking that I was able to manage the great concerns of the heart as easily as I governed the petty interests of a court, I swore, you heard me, I swore henceforward to live only to exercise my vengeance and procure your promotion.

It was requisite first of all, to have you liberated from a state prison, where you would not

have lingered four months, if my enemies had not leagued to counteract in a thousand ways all my endeavours. At last M. de —, promoted in consequence of my efforts to the high post which he now occupies, M. de — was nevertheless to set your liberation at a price which nearly rendered the procuring of it impossible. Judge if the sacrifice required appeared painful to me! The business was to restore you to the world, and I hesitated for several days. My friend, I shall repeat it, I do not pretend to boast here of my virtue, or of the virtue of women in general. What a difference however between the principles, inclinations and passions of the two sexes! how far your love from that I feel for you! You, Faublas, especially, who are able to divide yourself between three lovers, still find charms in the possession of the first object that chance throws in your way!

Alas! on the contrary, how grievously hurt did Madame de B— (so miserable already for having been obliged, that her justification should be complete, to acknowledge the rights of a husband, and to fulfil with him a rigorous duty) feel on the fatal day when to procure your rescue, she was forced to submit herself



to the brutal libidinous desires of a man destitute of delicacy; to the cruel caresses of a man totally indifferent to her! yes, my friend, M. de — has enjoyed me! it was only at my last hour that I was to make an avowal of the kind; nevertheless, among so many proofs of my unlimited attachment, consider this shameful devotedness as the most prominent.

You were set at liberty, I dared to see you again, I dared so to do! that was my first wrong, it was conducive to my latter errors, and to my tragical end.

Four months of absence must have cured me of my fatal love: at least I flattered myself it was so, when I had you called to Madame de Montdesir's; at our first interview your presence occasioned me much less emotion than it used to do formerly; I spoke to you of Justine without anger, of the Countess without much acrimony, and of Sophia without agitation, without any feeling of jealousy. I mentioned to you, in the sincerity of my heart, laudable resolutions which I thought would be immutable. At last, when I left you, I congratulated myself upon feeling only friendship for you; foolish woman! how was I deceived! the ill-

extinguished fire still burned under the ashes; a spark was going to escape, and to cause a new conflagration.

Remember, remember the day, when ready to set off for Compiègne, I went to bid you adieu. Hitherto, whilst preparing to chastise Rosambert, I had only entertained the desire of being revenged; you caused me to fear death. The sudden idea that there was a possibility of our being soon separated forever, made me shudder, and chilled me with terror. I immediately felt it was less desirable for me to accomplish my vengeance against an enemy; but I felt also more impatient of being re-habilitated in the eyes of my lover. Meanwhile, the new apprehensions which had astonished me, the momentary irresolution which they had produced, my still violent agitation, the perturbation of my senses, the emotions of my heart, all suggested plainly, that while attempting the life of Rosambert, I must, above all other things, take care to defend my own; that now the question was not so much to triumph as not to die; that I must especially strive to live, that I might adore you!

How could I have still been insensible of my

real disposition, since, even at Compiègne, in the moment of intoxication which followed my victory, my secret escaped me in your presence, and that of the Countess! It was, however, without having previously given it a thought, from a mere instinct of revived jealousy, that, seeing you on the point of joining again my most dangerous rival, I advised you to re-enter Paris again with Madame de Lignolle. Then, without rendering to myself a faithful account of my sentiments, I only discovered, amidst a crowd of jarring ideas, that I had been strangely mistaken when I had promised to restore Sophia to you, and with tranquillity to see you lavish your caresses upon her. I was made sensible, that a female, though she may have given a courageous example of self-abnegation, should not flatter herself of attaining the more heroical effort of entire devotedness. I ascertained, that a lover, though capable of renouncing her own happiness, could yet be unprovided with sufficient fortitude to suffer another to be happy. I found it out, felt indignant at the discovery, and shuddered at it. But at last, without presuming to form, for times to come, any decided project, I adopted at least to

retard for the present a re-union, the idea whereof alone occasioned my secret despair.

I despatched immediately Després from Compiègne to Fromonville to apprise M. du Portail of your arrival, and to throw more obstacles in your way, in case the Countess would allow you to go in search of your wife.

Faublas! I see you turn pale and tremble. Oh, you, whom I have loved too much! do not hate me! Oh, you, the author of all my errors, refuse not to view them with pity and indulgence! Too happy, believe me, is the woman of feeling, to whom propitious love has commanded proceedings not very blameable, who never was necessitated to betray an ungrateful lover, or to persecute rivals, alas! and whom the first step towards the abyss did not hurl to its bottom.

If you could form an idea of what I suffered at that inn at Montargis, especially at that castle in Gatinois, at that fatal castle of the Countess! Incomprehensible young man! how then, can you unite so much inconstancy to so much sensibility, such exquisite mildness and such barbarity? Your Sophia was no less dear to you, and yet you adored Madame de Li-

gnolle! Yes, I was an eye-witness, you already adored her! Ingrate! in the delirium of your fever, you pronounced the name of Eleanor as often as you did mine. Cruel youth! in your intervals of rationality, you would make me the confidant of all the love, the burning love you felt for her! It was not enough for me to tremble for the life of my lover, to see him in a house I abhorred, to witness another woman bestowing upon him those attentions I wished were committed to my only charge, I was moreover to hear from the mouth of unfaithful man—but let those dreadful recollections be laid aside. Who could have told me then that I was not to die through grief, because I was reserved to undergo numberless other trials, equally unsupportable, because all the horrors of my destiny were indispensably to be accomplished.

Faublas, my pocket book is there; look for the fatal letter that occasioned me to hasten the execution of my most dreadful determinations. Take away your father-in-law's letter, take it away; I know it by heart, and have no further occasion for it. What a letter! Good gods! How I am treated in it! how many crimes are

there attributed to me, the idea whereof had never come into my head! What a dreadful hereafter was I threatened with, that as yet I had not merited! the deep sentiment of an act of injustice irritates a proud mind, and will too frequently prompt it to commit the most unpardonable enormities. I have had the misfortune of experiencing the truth of that assertion: Mademoiselle de Pontis sharing a universal lover and public contempt with the Marchioness de B—! Ah! du Portail, you know but very little of that Marchioness de B—, whom your fury thus accuses! she never was affectionate nor generous by half. It was not to share Faublas that she went to seek him at Luxembourg! It was not to dispute him to Sophia that she subsequently permitted him to go and join her! Your hatred, notwithstanding, is the reward of the sacrifices which she has already made, and as a recompense for her painful daily struggles, you promise her, in addition to public contempt, unavoidable misfortunes. I well knew that you and your daughter both detested me—that men severely condemn from appearances, and never recall their judgments; that destiny, as inflexible as men, never

revoked its decrees, and that a great reverse was too often the pledge of a greater reverse still; I know it. But you yourself protest that your common persecutions will have no end. Well then, since I cannot be guarded against them, I will justify them! Du Portail, I am weary of imposing upon myself privations, without getting indemnified; I am tired of sacrificing myself for ingrates. Since I have no hopes left, since I have nothing more to lose, I wish at least to reap some benefit from my disgrace, which you rejoice at: I wish that love should return to abridge my existence, the termination whereof you call for. You will see what the Marchioness, though surrounded by enemies, can still undertake! you will see whether I am a woman to share a lover!

Thus, Faublas, thus in my despair, I took my oath that Sophia would not be restored to you, and that Madame de Lignolle, in her turn, would be made acquainted with the tortures that I had endured so long.

Compelled to let you re-enter Paris, I nevertheless found it necessary to have you leave it as soon as possible, lest some event, inimical to my new designs, should tend to make you dis-

cover that your father-in-law was returned to seek an asylum in the metropolis.—What! my Sophia—I beg, exclaimed Madame de B—, you will not interrupt me; the burning fever which supports me may leave me on a sudden, and I then would not retain sufficient powers to be able to speak. Do not interrupt me; strive above all things to conceal from me your cruel joy; compassionate the situation I am in.

Listen to me, continued she: M. du Portail was hurrying away from Fromonville with your wife and two female strangers unknown to me. Després commissioned one of my agents to stop at Puy-la-Lande, and to manage matters so that you could not procure horses; Després continued in pursuit of your father-in-law, who, leaving the two strangers at some distance from Montargis, proceeded on the same road, got out of his carriage with his daughter, and then across by-roads, took post-horses again at Dormans, and returned to Paris through Meaux. He was lost sight of at Bondy. Your father-in-law is certainly in the capital, but I know not by what means he has found the impenetrable retical wherein, for upwards of two months, he has escaped all my researches.



Nevertheless, through mere chance, you might have unexpectedly discovered what I sought to no purpose; I therefore thought it expedient to procure a situation for you, which would necessitate your leaving Paris, to go and inhabit a distant province, where I flattered myself I would soon render your exile agreeable; I had you appointed to a company in the regiment of ——

Madame de Fonrose, unhappily placed between the Countess and the Baron, might doubly oppose my designs. I easily brought on her rupture with Madame de Lignolle, and found means to persuade M. de Belcour to give up his unworthy mistress.

I continued to harbour just projects against my most cruel persecutor; I entertained still, hopes of obliging him within a few days to fight me again; and if, as in the first instance, I did not strike a decisive blow, if Rosambert escaped with his life, I expected I might at least force from him an avowal of his impostures, thus recover your esteem, and resume some value in mine own eyes. However, as your friend most assuredly would not pardon Madame de B—, for the excesses of which he

had been guilty towards her, it appeared indispensable to me at first to remove the perfidious adviser, and to try to put an end to the jokes with which he unceasingly outraged hymen in general, and some husbands in particular; I had Mademoiselle de Mésanges betrothed to him, and an order to join his regiment.

I had another infinitely formidable enemy left, namely, Madame de Lignolle, whom I would have loved much, if you had not made her my rival. La Fleur, whom I had bribed, the traitor la Fleur, would daily make to me such reports as continually increased my inquietude. It became pressing to raise between the Countess and you obstacles insurmountable for ever; I induced the Captain to come to Paris; and he hastened to Versailles to solicit a *lettre de cachet*, which was readily obtained; Madame de Lignolle was going to be arrested.

Faublas, wherefore this lively agitation? Whence comes this sudden paleness? Do you accuse me of having been cruel to Eleanor? Wait, my friend, if you judge me precipitately, you will judge me with too much rigour, to-morrow the Captain was to be ordered back to Brest, and to re-embark there; the Countess

was to be deprived of her liberty for a few days only; soon after she would have been assigned as a prison, the estate which her aunt possesses in the Franche-Comté. Nothing, I protest, would have been neglected to protect that unhappy child against the resentment of her relatives and those of her husband. But after the rumours which her detention would have set afloat, you never could have seen her again, and I besides had kept in reserve several means of preventing any further connection between you.

Lastly, you were going to Nancy, in the vicinity of which place you and I were to meet again; it was in Lorraine that I was to recover my lover, and to see more days of happiness. How many vain projects! Ah! unfortunate woman! when I was in hopes of devoting my life to you, death awaited me! The fatal sword of the Marquis, after depriving me of my victim, is come to strike his own within your very arms. It is all over then! I see my grave open to receive me! there I must descend at six-and-twenty!

Fatal consequence of a passion too tardily opposed! may my example serve as a warning

to the crowd of unfortunate females threatened with a similar end! May it, amongst the great number, save some! Let them all be told of my first weaknesses, of my first reverses, of my useless resistance, my culpable projects, and my deplorable end. Let them be informed that love never procured me one moment's felicity, but which had been preceded by lively inquietudes, accompanied with the greatest dangers, and followed by most irreparable misfortunes. Let them know as much, and may they, filled with salutary terror, stop, if possible, on the brink of the precipice into which I have sunk.

And in order that they may conceive the supreme power of the love which allured me, you, Faublas, who perhaps, will have wondered at me, even in my last moments, you, my ever idolised lover, tell them that my good name, my riches, my rank, my beauty forfeited beyond redemption, did not cost me a regret, but that our eternal separation was the only cause of my despair; tell them, nevertheless, that before I left you, I found myself too happy in saving your dearer life at the cost of my own; too happy for being able, at least, once more to

be yours, and in a last embrace to calm partly the ardour of the fire that consumed it, of that devouring fire which was to be quenched only with—

She did not finish, a sudden and extreme weakness prevented her.

The physician came running in, alarmed by my cries; he requested me to withdraw, if I did not wish, repeated he several times, to accelerate the fatal moment.

On my return, Madame de Lignolle exclaimed: You have stopped a long while! Is she dead?—No, my dear.—No! so much the worse.—How so?—To be sure! I had not thought of it at first! her husband killed her, because he surprised you in the act of infidelity to me!

I was at great pains to pacify the Countess. At last, however, her heart re-opened to compassion in behalf of the unfortunate Madame de B—, and the critical predicament in which she stood herself, calling for all her attention, we consulted together on the means of preventing the misfortunes with which we were threatened.

We were allowed another happy night, dur-

ing which my Eleanor, whilst manifesting proofs of unlimited affection, ceased not speaking of her elopement, which had become indispensable. It was agreed upon, that in the course of the following day, I should make every necessary preparation, so that we might be ready to set off at night.

Madame de Lignolle, with unbounded confidence, already fancied she was far from her native country; whereas I, my heart oppressed with grief, and my mind still agitated with secret irresolutions, trembled at the prospect of doubtful days, and scarcely dared to think of the two certain present circumstances. Oh, Madame de B—! I could see you continually on your death-bed! Oh, my father! oh, my sister! oh, my Sophia! I made useless efforts to remove the recollection of you that oppressed me!

It was now day-break. A shocking sight, a sinister omen awaited me. When I entered the room of the Marchioness, her eyes were wandering, and, in broken accents, she would say: Yes—this is my grave; but that other, whom is it intended for? Where is Faublas? cried she several times, while looking at me: Where is

Faublas!—run—tell him that my enemies intend to assassinate him—that the Marquis and the Captain—the Captain!—he approaches!—he drags!—ah, poor little women! Come, then, Faublas! quick! what are you doing?—who detains you?—come to her assistance! It is too late!—it is all over!—ye gods! great gods! it was for her they were digging that grave by the side of mine!

Madame de B—, violently agitated, was strong enough to be seated in her bed, but as her attendants came running to oblige her to take another position, she fell backward. I could hear her still mutter some incoherent sentences, which redoubled my apprehensions and grief.

A terrible fever! said the physician, a continual delirium! in this situation she has spent the whole night! Sir, I must not flatter you, it is impossible she can resist long.

I went to Rosambert's; he began to give some hopes; nevertheless, the surgeons could not yet presume to answer for his perfect recovery. I was not permitted to speak to him.

It is true, then, that everything fails me at once; that no support is left me, at a moment

when I stand in need of the assistance of everybody. It is true, then, that I am going to forsake my father, and to leave, perhaps forever, the place in which I know that my Sophia now breathes. It must be so, unless I wish to lose both my Eleanor and my child. Unfortunate man! I must.

I went all over Paris to procure a number of articles necessary for the elopement of Madame de Lignolle; yet I know not what dolorous presentiment warned me that she was going on too long a journey. Whilst I was preparing everything for our common departure, it seemed to me as if I was tormented by a painful dream, which was ere long to be at an end, but a secret voice cried out to me, that my awakening would be dreadful.

When I returned to the hotel, I found that Madame d'Armincour was waiting for me in my father's apartment; she asked me what I had done with her niece. Eleanor and I had foreseen the visit and the questions of the Marchioness; we had agreed upon the answers I was to return: Your niece, madam, is gone under the care of a friend, whose courage and fidelity are known to me. It is in Switzerland



she has sought an asylum; she has preferred that country, because it is not far distant from your Franche-Comté.

She is saved! exclaimed the Marchioness, embracing me: ah, how much I am obliged to you! She is gone to Switzerland! I shall follow her! My dear niece! how have you managed to tear her from her enemies? No one has seen you appear at the hotel; no one has seen her go out; and yet it was not a quarter of an hour since I had been speaking to her in her room, when they came to arrest her. She is saved! but alas! a thousand perils still surround her! Admitting that she can escape her persecutors, what will become of her, far from her native country, far from her relations, and, must I say it, far from him whom she loves with idolatry? Ah, young man! young man! you have plunged my child into an abyss of miseries!

At these words, Madame d'Armincour left me with tears in her eyes.

I hastened to the attic, to join Madame de Lignolle, who was to remain all day long in my servant's room.—My dear Eleanor, everything is ready, nothing more appears to impede our

flight; keep yourself prepared for twelve at night precisely.—Keep yourself prepared! repeated she. At any time, and in every place, but to-day especially, and in this room, what have I to do else but to wait for you with an impatience, of which you have no idea? Keep yourself in readiness! Faublas, wherefore do you address me without thinking of what you are saying? Wherefore that air, for ever pre-occupied? Wherefore that sad countenance, when the happy moment approaches which is to re-unite us, never again to be separated? When it is certain that, henceforth, we shall have it in our power to live and die together? —My love, Madame d'Armincour has just been here.—I know it; I saw her from this window. —The Marchioness is going immediately to Switzerland; she thinks of arriving there only after her niece; she will be there a few hours before us. Your aunt will be there; my father and sister will not!—Leave a letter for M. de Belcour.—Undoubtedly; I was thinking of it —a letter?—what is a letter? My Eleanor, the Baron is waiting for me; I cannot dispense appearing at the table; I shall leave it as soon as possible, and shall return to try and eat a

bit of dinner with you.—Well, go Faublas, and make haste back. So long as I can see you, I am easy in my mind; I die with inquietude when you are not by me.

She kissed me, and I went down.

M. de Belcour saw me refuse all kind of food; he heard me answer him only by monosyllables; he withdrew, and watered with his tears the hand which he had just been holding out to me: You have not left your father and your sister to follow your mistress, said he to me at last; your father and your sister will reward you for it; they will lavish upon you, in your misfortune, the most tender consolation, and your afflictions then, being shared, will not overwhelm you. My son, it was from you that I heard that on the day before yesterday, M. de Rosambert had fallen by the sword of M. de B—, but it is public rumour that has informed me since, in another rencounter, the Marquis had exercised upon a dearer enemy a more dreadful vengeance. Sooner or later, my son, all the objects of our illegitimate affections must perish, or be torn away from us by some accident; but cannot you expect a lasting felicity, you, to whom heaven, till such time as it

will restore to you the adorable wife who idolises you, has left good relatives who cherish you.

The Baron was still speaking, when a letter was brought to him: God of Mercy! exclaimed he, after reading it, you already have compassion on him! here, my friend, here, read yourself.

“At length the Marchioness has received the punishment due to her crimes; and the unfortunate Countess is henceforward lost for your son, who I am very willing to believe it, is now more unhappy than he has ever been reprehensible, the lessons of adversity must have corrected him forever. Tell him, that in the course of two hours I will bring his wife back to him, and that if he is entirely deserving of meeting her again, the day on which my children are re-united, will ever be reckoned the happiest day of my existence.

“LE COMTE LOVINSKI.”

My first movement was a transport of joy; what a happiness! what an unexpected happiness! But a moment of reflection made me

sensible of the embarrassments and dangers of my new situation. Great God! but—What is the matter? What ails you, brother!—Nothing, sister.—Whence the extreme agitation in which I see you, my son?—what disturbs your peace of mind?—Can you ask me, sir? Madame de B— is dying! a thousand perils still surround Madame de Lignolle, and you ask me what disturbs my peace! I certainly adore my wife! but in what moment is she restored to me? You know but the least part of my inquietudes! you are a stranger to one-half of the sorrow that weighs on my heart! I stand in need of complete tranquillity. I request of you, as a particular favour, sir, and I beg of you too, my dear Adelaide, permit me to indulge at liberty my reveries; leave me by myself, leave me quite alone till the arrival of Sophia.—Whither are you running, my friend?—To Jasmin—to call him—no, to my room—not at all! I am going down into the garden—don't follow me there, I beseech you!

Sophia returns in two hours, and I set off to-night with Madame de Lignolle! I go, when at length in the arms of my wife, love is preparing for me the reward—ungrateful lover of

Eleanor! what a desire do I dare to form in behalf of Sophia!—Ah!—I know which of those two charming women I prefer; but who will tell me by which I am the most beloved?

On this day, however, to secure the happiness of the one, I must cause the despair of the other. Cause the despair of Sophia! may rather Madame de Lignolle perish a hundred times!

May she perish! my Eleanor! my Eleanor and my child! O the most barbarous of men, what have you been saying?

Unless I can carry away Madame de Lignolle, she is ruined; persecuted by the family of her husband, degraded in the opinion of her own, threatened with eternal confinement, she has no friends left in the world but him for whom her love has sacrificed everything. In me rest all her hopes; if I betray them, the Countess will find her greatest enemy in her own heart: how will she be able to defend herself against her persecutors? How, above all things, will she escape the violence of her passion?

Sophia has hitherto resisted absence, because our separation was not to be imputed to me;

but when, on the very day of her return, I shall run away with a rival, my forsaken wife—if I desert Sophia, her grief will kill her.

Unhappy man! What am I to do? Nothing, except by a prompt death to get rid of all my perplexities! Nothing! except to end by a crime, a life already—If I immolate myself, neither of the two will survive me.

Unhappy man! hear your destiny; to live is the law it imposes upon you; also, between two objects almost equally dear and sacred, to choose a victim.

Such is the fruit of my errors! Remorse! Great God! and wherefore? you have given me the most loving heart, and the most ardent senses; you have willed that I should meet at the same time with several women, formed purposely to please the eye, and to charm the soul; I have adored them all at the same time—adored them still less than they deserved! I have done no more! If ever I was blameable, the fault is yours. If I am now too cruelly punished, is the fault to be imputed entirely to that other unfortunate creature whom you have not cured of her fatal love? O Madame

de B—, what miseries you have accumulated upon me!

If I do not carry away my Eleanor, she will be ruined; my Sophia, if I forsake her, will die through grief. What man, if he were in my situation, after the most violent struggles, could have firmness sufficient, or rather be barbarous enough, to be able to fix upon a determination? If at least anyone deigned to help me with succouring advice. Let me go and consult my father—I am not in my proper senses!

What, are there no means of conciliating —Sir, interrupted my servant, who had approached me unperceived, Madame, who sees you from yonder window, wonders at your leaving her by herself in my room, to walk alone in this garden.—Madame? I am not at home! I don't wish to see anybody; no more females especially!—My dear master, 'tis Madame la Comtesse.—Oh! it is not Madame, then! Well, what does my Eleanor want?—That you would not forsake her.—Tell her that is what I am thinking of.—But she desires you to go up to her directly.—Be it so—show me the way.—Show me the way! repeated he, I



thought you knew it! O my dear master! how sorry I am to see you in the situation you are in!—These are still but roses! It can't be helped, Jasmin, my hour is come!—hark, my friend, you will soon hear it rumoured—What do you mean, sir?—What?—Why don't you finish?—I don't remember what I was saying to you—You will soon hear it rumoured!—Yes, that my wife is returned; but don't mention it to the Countess.—Take care: here are M. de Belcour and Mademoiselle Adelaide coming.—Return to Madame de Lignolle, I shall follow you.

I went to meet my father: oh! I request of you, suffer me at liberty to meditate and weep, let me indulge my grief alone. I will not leave the hotel, and you will see me again as soon as Sophia makes her appearance.

My father and sister having left the garden, I was again absorbed in my deep reveries, from which Jasmin came a second time to rouse me.

So then I must send for you, said she.—Do you think, my dear, that your aunt is already gone?—Wherefore do you ask that question?—I was thinking that Madame d'Armincours could have taken you away.—Taken me away!

with you?—With me? perhaps she would not have been so condescending.—And what then?—What then? I would have gone to join you.—So we would not have gone together?—My dear, if it were become impossible?—Who could prevent it? Not an hour ago you were telling me yourself—An hour ago I did not know—how could I have guessed?—What?—Nothing, my Eleanor, I speak at random—we shall quit Paris at midnight precisely.

I could not withhold my tears; and as she asked me what occasioned my weeping, I repeated that truly cruel question: Do you think that your aunt is already gone?—What does my aunt signify to me in the present occasion, exclaimed she. Was it that I should go with Madame d'Armincours that I have sacrificed my fortune and character? Was it for her sake that I have exposed myself to all sorts of miseries? Yet, sir, the more the decisive moment draws near, the more I see your irresolutions to redouble. It is not your father alone who gives rise to them! it is not the death of Madame de B— that makes you shed tears!

Ingrate! you shudder at the idea of burying yourself in a solitude where Sophia could not

penetrate!—Where Sophia could not penetrate! —Remember, sir, that I had projected my flight before it became necessary; make yourself satisfied, that it is not my present hopeless situation that compels me to seek an asylum in a foreign country. If, therefore, you are prompted by no other motive to come along with me, but that of securing me against the resentment of my family, you may stay where you are. I declare to you that I have kept in reserve against my enemies divers resources. Divers resources!—I have; do not reduce me, however, to the necessity of using them. If you have already ceased loving the mother, compassionate the child; reduce me not to the necessity of using them, repeated she, falling on her knees before me. Too long since have I flattered myself, with the hope of consecrating my whole life to you; it would be too dreadful for me to end it now, while accusing you of barbarity.

These last words of Madame de Lignolle, completely discomposed me. I could not tell whether my answers were calculated to remove or to increase her inquietudes; all I can recollect is, that during the whole course of that

day, equally preoccupied as myself, she looked very sad. The more evening was drawing near, the more I felt my dolorous impatience and my secret struggles to increase: my body, the same as my mind, underwent the most violent agitation. I was continually going from my father's apartment to the room of my servant, enquiring of all I met, what o'clock it was, and repeatedly looking at my watch; sometimes I would find that the hours went on very slow, sometimes I accused them of being too fast.

At last, towards dusk, a carriage entered the yard of the hotel: excuse me, my Eleanor, it is a visit which I must receive, I shall be with you in a moment.—A visit! exclaimed she. I heard no more, but flew into the passage where Jasmin was waiting for orders. Be quick, go in, and do not suffer her to quit the room.

I ran down as quick as lightning. I found in the hall the most beauteous of women, improved within seven months. She flew into my arms: O my beloved! if I had not been constantly promised this happy day, I never could have borne the tortures of absence! my father-in-law embraced me: Oh! that I had been permitted sooner, said he to me, to make both her

and you happy! Adelaide transported with joy, came to share with me the caresses of her dear friend, and my father shed delicious tears, as he pressed M. du Portail to his bosom.

We altogether mounted into M. de Belcour's apartment. I shall not attempt to describe the transports of Sophia, those of her lover, the unspeakable satisfaction of my sister and of our happy fathers, all I can tell is that a whole hour elapsed like a minute. Alas! you must know that during a whole hour the unhappy Madame de Lignolle was entirely forgotten.

It is no mistake! I hear somebody crying out, said the Baron.—Crying out! Father!—Great God!—Ah! 'tis Jasmin who amuses himself in counterfeiting a female's voice.—I shall leave you for a moment.

I found the Countess in a fit of dreadful anger; so you are come at last! sir, am I your prisoner? Your impertinent valet has kept me here by force! While she was speaking, Jasmin on his side was saying: sir, she wished to jump into the yard, and that is the reason why I have fastened the window.—You have had plenty of time to receive your visit; resumed Madame de Lignolle; I hope you will

not leave me again.—Supper is waiting for me. It is too early! besides you shall not sup to-day. When are we to set off?—My dearest, I beg of you,—grant me one day longer, only one day. —One day! perfidious man!

She rushed towards the door, I stopped her.

Leave me, cried she, I insist upon going out. —Going out to be ruined.—I will go down! I wish to speak to her! I wish to tell her that I am your wife!—How!—Perfidious man! I saw her getting out of her carriage. I knew her again by her shape, by her head of hair. I knew her to be the woman at Fromonville!—Ah! how miserable I am! Ah! how beautiful she is!—and the cruel man demands of me one day!—I shall stop here—in a garret of his hotel.—I shall stop devoured with ennui, inquietude, and jealousy—whilst he will occupy with her the apartment where last night—ingrate! I shall stop here, while in the arms of a rival—One day! not even one hour! Hear me, Faublas, continued she with excessive vehemence: do you love me?—More than my very life, I take my oath I do.—Save me then. Take notice, you have not a moment to lose; you have not two ways left of preserving me.

Let us depart immediately.—Immediately!—Yes, it is already dark, let us go down, get into a hackney coach, reach the first inn beyond the turnpike: Jasmin will bring us our postchaise there—My Eleanor—Say yes or no.

I was going to kneel before her, but she drew back. My Eleanor.—Yes or no! resumed she.—Consider that in the present moment it is impossible.—Impossible! see, perfidious man, remember, that it is you who will have murdered me.

She held concealed in her right hand a pair of short scissors with which she stabbed herself. Notwithstanding I had stopped her arm rather late, the violence of the blow was much diminished, yet the blood ran in great abundance, and the Countess fainted away. My God! gracious heaven! that was wanted to complete my miseries. Go, Jasmin, go then and fetch the best surgeon. Run. Bring him through the garden back door. Run, my man, the dearest half of me is in danger.

Till such time as he could return, I paid every attention to Madame de Lignolle. What a joy succeeded my mortal apprehensions, when I discovered that by stopping the Countess's

arm, I had most luckily averted the blow; the double pointed weapon, instead of entering her breast, had slipped on the surface, where I could see only one single wound. I nevertheless could not bind it without mingling my tears with the blood that continued to flow.

I had just done, when the Baron called out: Faublas, are you not coming down?—Presently, father.

How could I leave my Eleanor, who had not yet recovered the use of her senses? I remained by the side of her and called her a hundred times, but to no purpose.

At length, however, she began to give some signs of life, when the Baron in a tone of the greatest impatience, came calling out a second time: Are you not coming down!—In a moment, father, in a moment.

Judge of my alarms, when I heard M. de Belcour, instead of re-entering his apartment, coming up into Jasmin's room. What can he be doing continually, cried he, in his servant's room ever since dinner-time? I had only time to seize the fatal scissors, to pull the door after me, and to go and meet the Baron. In order to plead a likely excuse, I hastened to represent



to him that notwithstanding Sophia's return, I sometimes wanted to be alone.

We returned into the drawing-room. He has been weeping! said my wife. She then added in a low tone of voice: It is the recollection of Madame de B— that cost you those tears. I forgive you; her end has been so truly awful! O my beloved, I will endeavour to restore to you all that you have lost, and I will love you so much, that henceforth you will not have it in your power to love any other.

My father, M. du Portail, and my sister joined Sophia to lavish upon me their cruel consolations; I wished to avoid them, I wanted to go out, but they all detained me. What I suffered upon the occasion is not to be conceived, their tender anxiety was troublesome, even Sophia's caresses were insupportable to me. However, another quarter of an hour having elapsed, in the most violent struggles, inquietude got the better of every other consideration; I rushed to the door vociferating: Leave me! I wish to be alone.

I went upstairs, and found in the passage on the attic, a surgeon and my servant, who were waiting for me. I applied the key to the lock,

but the door flew open of itself. How comes this? I had locked it!—That may be, retorted Jasmin, but the lock did not hold fast.—We entered the room, Madame de Lignolle was no longer there. A stab from a dagger would not have hurt me so much. Great God! what is become of her? Where can she be gone?

I rushed out, and met on the staircase my sister, my wife, her father and my own; I passed through the midst of them all and made off. Where is he thus running away from me? exclaimed Sophia.—To find her out, to save her, or to perish with her.

Yes, sir, answered the Swiss; she has been gone about ten minutes; I thought she was a woman that madame had brought with her.

Yes, sir, answered a good lady who had just taken shelter under an archway in the place Vendome; I have just spoken to her; the poor child was dreadfully agitated! she refused taking a part of my umbrella. No, no, said she to me; I want water, I am burning! I saw her going to the Tuilleries through the passage des Fenillans; the poor little thing will be wet through.

What in fact must have redoubled my terror

was that no one could have ventured about the streets in such bad weather; the heat had been excessive during the whole day; the south wind began to blow; thick clouds were gathering round, dreadful flashes of lightning blazed in the sky, while hail and rain poured in torrents. My soul was filled with consternation; the enraged elements I viewed as forerunners of heavenly vengeance.

I reached the passage, and enquired of the waiters at the coffee-house whether they had seen the wretched woman? I was answered that she had made towards the drawbridge; there I ran; found an invalid on duty: She has walked twice round this basin said he, and then went up the great terrace. There again I ran, and made enquiries of the Swiss, who referred me to the sentry of the Port-royale.

At that moment—methinks I hear it still, and my pen drops from my hand—At that same moment the clock of the Théatins \* struck nine.

Sentinel! a female, young, pretty, dressed in a white gown, with a handkerchief tied round her head.—There she is, answered he, coolly.

\* A religious order so called.

The cruel man extended his arm, and pointed to the river.—How! there!—To be sure, she has just jumped in; it is her whom they are searching after.—You miscreant! Why did you not stop her? and, without waiting for the barbarian's reply, I plunged after the unfortunate Countess.

At first I could scarcely resist the waves, which opened, roared, and drove me at a distance. At length I collected all my powers, and through the bellowing stream, sought at random that which the boatmen were also in search of. On a sudden, a loud clap of thunder was heard, and the heavenly fires struck the liquid element. By their tremendous blaze, however, I distinguished I know not what, which only showed itself to disappear again; I immediately dived, seized by the hair, and brought on shore—what an object did I bring up! what an object of eternal compassion! This is my beloved! I turned my eyes aside, and fell close to her, too happy to lose, with the recollection of my existence, that of my troubles.

The cruel men have just called me to life again; they enquire of me whither they are to carry that woman? they ask me for her name

and her direction?—What is that to you? I was answered, that she must be examined, that it is still time, perhaps, to save her life,—To save her life! The whole of my fortune would not suffice to repay so great a service! Quick! Place Vendome.—But no. What a sight for—rue du Bac; the distance to rue du Bac is not so great.

Madame de Lignolle was carried into the bed-room next to that in which Madame de B—still breathed. The Marchioness had entirely recovered the use of her senses.—She heard my groans, and knew my voice again. She sent me a message requesting I would go and speak to her. What is the occasion of all that bustle? asked she, in an almost extinct voice. I was going to answer her, when I saw the Count de Lignolle, followed by two strangers, entering the room: There he is, cried he to them, pointing at me; and one of those gentlemen, drawing up to me, said: I arrest you by the king's command.

The Marchioness heard those words, and re-animated by the excess of her grief: Is it possible, exclaimed she? What! my eyes are not yet closed, and my enemies already triumph!

the ungrateful M. de —— already forgets me! Ah! Faublas, my ruin then will have caused yours!—Yes, you barbarian! replied I, in a fit of despair; and the misfortune of which you now complain is the least of all those which your fatal passion has brought upon me. A victim to your rage, Madame de Lignolle is now dying? What do I say? She is already dead, perhaps! Ah! wherefore did not I die on the first day of my acquaintance with you? or, rather, wherefore did not righteous heaven from the first moment crush you under the weight?—She interrupted me. Unmerciful Gods! you must be satisfied! your most cruel vengeance is accomplished. I descend into the grave loaded with maledictions of Faublas!

She fell backward on her bed and expired.

As I was returning to the other room where Madame de Lignolle was surrounded by members of the faculty, one of them was saying: Why strip her naked before everyone? Wherefore thus violate decorum to no purpose? There is no resource; she is dead.

Thus, almost at the same moment struck with several mortal blows, I lost the use of my senses a second time. Then, indeed, it was an

act of great inhumanity to call me to life again. Yes, my Sophia, if now, under pain of being separated from you by a speedy death, if I were to have a relapse, and merely for an hour to suffer what I have endured for several weeks; if I were so reduced, O my Sophia! judge of my past tortures! I would rather leave you and die.

BARON DE FAUBLAS TO COUNT LOVINSKI.

*3d May, 1785.*

I am delighted, my friend, to hear that your king, just in his clemency, has called you back into your native country, and has been pleased to restore your confiscated property, to re-instate you in your former offices, besides granting you his royal protection. Yet in what moment did you leave me! I must have been carried away by my excessive grief if your daughter and mine had not been by me.

I have already informed you that they had detained him for ten days in the castle of Vincennes; that, on account of my particular request, he was removed to a house at Picpus, where lunatics are treated. At last, however, mercy has been shown to the most unhappy of fathers; I have been allowed to take my child

to my own house. I am just returned with him. Great God! what a situation did I find him in! Almost naked, loaded with chains, his body bruised, his hands torn, his face all over blood, his looks fiery, it was not cries that he uttered, but bellowings, dreadful bellowings.

He knew neither his father, nor my Adelaide, nor even your Sophia. His derangement is complete; it is shocking. The most horrid images constantly stand before his eyes; he speaks of nothing but of tombs and assassins.

Such is the result of my guilty weakness.

From one moment to another I expect, from London, a physician famous for the treatment of those diseases. I am told that no one will cure my son, if Doctor Willis does not. Let him come, then, let him restore my Faublas to me, and accept of all I am worth.

My son, at least, will no longer be chained. I have had a room matted all round, where six men are to attend, day and night. Six men, perhaps, will not be sufficient. I have seen him just now in a fit of rage, break with his teeth, as if it had been a frail glass, the silver dish that contained his dinner; I have seen him drag, from one corner of the room to the other,



his wondering keepers. If this horrible frenzy should last some days longer, it will be all over with my son, and with me.

It was only the day before yesterday, that your amiable sisters returned from Briare, and took, in my hotel, an apartment close to that of their niece. Their niece! what shall I say to you of her grief? it is equal to mine.

Adieu, my friend! finish your business, and make haste to return.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

*4th May, 1785, midnight.*

Dr. Wills arrived last night; he has spent the whole forenoon near his patient, with the keepers.

At two o'clock, he came to let me know that my son was going to be bled; but that, subsequently, to make him undergo his first experiment, it was requisite he should be chained. The unfortunate youth was therefore loaded with irons; and from an excess of precaution, of which the event proved all the wisdom, the doctor insisted upon the keepers staying in the room, at some distance from him.

Every preparation being completed at six

o'clock, Sophia was the first person who entered the room.

He looked at her attentively for some minutes, without speaking a single word; but, by degrees, his countenance became more placid, and his looks more mild. At length, he said: It is you! I see you again! You are restored to me! My too generous dear! come nearer! come near to me!

Sophia transported with joy, was running to him with open arms: Take care you don't, cried the doctor; and my son immediately repeated: Take care you don't! Yes, beauteous mamma, take care you don't! The cruel Marquis only waits for the moment to strike the blow! Here you are, however! What a happiness! I thought you were dead! The deep wound was in the left breast, close to the heart!

Adelaide then, quite trembling, came to join her dear friend; they mutually supported each other.

Here you are, my little dear; exclaimed he in a mild tone of voice. You are come to see me with your mistress!——Speak, Justine, speak to me: wherefore do you appear so sad? you, whom I have always seen in such good

spirits?——But I believe it is *Mademoiselle de Brumont*! Yes, it is a shade that comes to frighten me!

Willis immediately said to my daughter: Retire.

The attentive patient repeated: Undoubtedly—retire—and you likewise, *Madame la Marquis*. The fatal hour is drawing near. The *Baroness* knows that you are here; your cruel husband.—I have no arms—he might assassinate you—my too generous friend, withdraw.——But a moment! begin by restoring me my *Eleanor*. Restore her to me, perfidious wretch! Restore her to me; if not, I will tear you to pieces with mine own hands!

*Sophia* ran away. I made my appearance too soon. The very moment he saw me, he cried out, in a dreadful voice: The Captain! You are come this distance to tear away your sister from me, to cut her throat! wait!

At these words, he took so violent a spring, that he broke his chain. If I had not immediately escaped, and if his keepers had not prevented his pursuing me, the unhappy youth would have killed his father.

*Sophia*, *Adelaide*, and myself, listened from

the room adjoining. He seemed to have resumed some tranquillity; but towards the close of the day he displayed signs of a violent agitation, which increased in proportion as the night became darker.

At last, in a tone of voice which made us shudder with fear and horror, he distinctly spoke the following words: The wind is broke loose! the sky is on fire! the waters bellow! what a clap of thunder!—nine o'clock—she is there!

As he wished to rush out, his keepers prevented him—Wherefore stop me! Don't you see her re-appear above the waves? Barbarians! you wish the mother and child to perish! And you likewise, my father, sister, Sophia, you too prevent my assisting her! You command her death; everybody coalesces against her! well, I shall save her, in spite of you all!

Seven men scarcely sufficed to hold him; he struggled with them during a whole quarter of an hour; and the burning fever which occasioned those prodigious powers having subsided on a sudden, he fell, nearly motionless. One may easily perceive that he was plagued by horrid dreams. Oh, my son! my dear son!

Severe gods, be just also; is he not too severely punished?

I have just had a long conversation with the doctor; and am infinitely satisfied with the treatment he is preparing for Faublas. Expect the recovery of the patient from the skill of the physician: on that rest all our hopes. Adieu, my friend.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

*6th May, 1785, six in the evening.*

I have found at Dugny, a village near le Bourget, at three leagues from Paris, a house which has appeared to me well suited to the purpose of the doctor. It is surrounded by a large English garden, across which runs a wide river, though not deep and generally peaceable. On its banks are planted poplars, weeping willows, and cypress trees. In that abode of regret, everything at first sight seems to recall sad recollections; yet the beauty of the place, its tranquil aspect, and the purer air one breathes there, must speedily remove violent passions, and dispose the soul to tender melancholy: there it is that we came to settle this morning.

Towards the evening, at sunset, as usual, my

son imagined he could see the dreadful storm, and that he heard the fatal clock to strike. As usual, he repeated those dreadful words: Nine o'clock! She is there! Already in a fit of rage, the unfortunate young man imputed to us the death of that woman whom we prevented him from assisting, when Sophia, concealed in an adjacent room, pursuant to the doctor's prescription, cried out as loud as she could: Wherefore stop him! Let all the doors be opened! Let him be set at liberty!

He immediately rushed out, ran down stairs as quick as lightning, and on a sudden, having perceived the river, he jumped into it. We were following him at some distance, and I held myself in readiness to plunge likewise, in case we should be threatened with some new misfortune. He swam for about twenty minutes, always keeping near the bridge, from the top of which he had leaped in. At last he got on shore, and groaned bitterly. He next reached the darkest bower, continued silent for a long time, and then on a sudden exclaimed: If you do not recover, here I shall dig a grave for you. He afterwards appeared to lend an attentive ear; and as if he only repeated what

somebody would have ventured saying to him, cried out: She is dead. Ah! wherefore apprise me of it so bluntly? He fainted away; and we carried him back into his room.

Adieu, my friend. When will you return? When will you come to assist us in supporting our troubles?

P.S.—I was going to forget a piece of news. Before I left Paris, I was told that Madame de Montdesir had just been taken to St. Martin;\* such is the effect of M. de B—'s just resentment.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

*7th May, 1785, midnight.*

There has been less agitation in the course of the day; he was heard to speak so often of the Marquis and of the captain; but this evening, at the fatal hour, the horrid idea returned. Sophia then, as on the preceding day, cried out: Wherefore stop him? let every door be open! let him be set at liberty! As on the preceding day, he jumped into the river; but on his return in the bower, he found a block of black marble which the doctor had brought there. At first he shuddered; by degrees we

\* A house of confinement for prostitutes.

saw him approach, trembling! At last, by the light of a lamp, fastened to the cypress tree, he very distinctly read this inscription: "Here lies Madame de Lignolle." He immediately threw himself on the tomb, with his feet and hands he struck the marble, and groaned for a long while; but he did not faint away. Near the block of marble several mattresses had been placed, upon which, after an hour's sufferings, he extended himself, and fell asleep. Blankets were then spread over him. He seemed not to be so agitated in his sleep as usual.

I have received two notes for him: the one from the Vicomte de Lignolle, and the other from the Marquis de B—. Ah! when will my son have it in his power to answer his enemies? Adieu, my friend.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

*9th May, 1785, ten in the morning.*

Let us hope, my friend, some happy alteration has already taken place. This morning, at daybreak, he returned to his room of his own accord. He has slept a few hours in the daytime. At sunset, he saw no storm; but with symptoms of approaching agitation, said: O compassionate Divinity! will you then forget



me this day! the moment is coming near, come then to my assistance, deliver me from my enemies. His wife immediately cried out: Let him be set at liberty. He manifested some signs of joy, went out without much precipitation, advanced towards the river, but stopped on the bridge, casting a sad look upon the water: So quiet and so cruel! did he say with a deep sigh. Alas!

When he entered the bower he shuddered; he groaned repeatedly, kissed the tomb several times; and then we saw him get up and search for something. He finally broke a branch of the cypress, and on the sand round the tomb wrote the following words: "Here lies also the Marchioness de B—."

He stopped all night in the bower; and, as if he shunned light, re-entered his room at day-break.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

15th May, 1785.

Dr. Willis seems to have entirely succeeded in what was most pressing; for these last six days the dreadful vision has not returned. The derangement is still complete, but the frenzy has absolutely subsided; and if I am not to

flatter myself with my son ever recovering his reason, I am already certain we shall not have to lament his death.

The recollection of the Marquis and of the Captain seldom torments him; and when he speaks of them, it is no longer with the same fury. He no longer threatens the doctor, neither does he beat his keepers; he resumes the natural meekness of his disposition. His memory also begins to return, not only on whatever relates to the Marchioness, but especially to the Countess. The ungrateful young man never speaks of his father or of his sister; sometimes, nevertheless, the name of Sophia is near escaping him. Does he know us again? I dare not believe it; and the doctor pretends it is not time yet for us to make our appearance before the unhappy patient.

Every evening, when he hears the voice of his wife, he goes to groan in the bower; but he cannot weep; but, continually absorbed in profound sadness, he is still far from displaying tender, soft melancholy. Yesterday evening he, however, quitted the tomb several times to pace up and down the adjacent walks. We have not observed without lively sorrow that he always

preferred the darkest, that he took long strides, and that whenever he heard the parish clock strike, agitated with a sudden shivering, he would run to the bank of the river, and look, with extreme inquietude, whether anything appeared on the surface of the water.

The doctor, ever ready to indulge his patient, when there is not too much danger, has had the tomb of the Marchioness placed by the side of that of the Countess. I don't know the reason why their unhappy lover has objected to see the two monuments in the same bower. He has always covered with earth the marble block placed last; and always written on the sand, close to the tomb of Madame de Lignolle: "Here lies also the Marchioness de B—."

I fear, I feel inquietude, I find time very long. The doctor comforts me; he tells me that we must not be in too great a hurry, that he is going on as well as possible. Be it so; but your daughter and mine, the same as myself, stand in need of all our fortitude.

P.S.—M. de Rosambert will get cured of his wound; but at the death of Madame de B—, he must have been charged with grave accusations. He has lost his situation at court, and it



*He fell senseless into her arms, she supported him.*

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UNIV. OF  
CALIFORNIA

TO VIRU  
ABSOULAO

is rumoured as certain, that the officers of his corps intended to have him apprised that they will serve with him no longer.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

*16th May, 1785, nine in the evening.*

O my friend! congratulate me, congratulate yourself; your daughter, your adorable daughter has saved us all.

This evening she exclaimed: let him be set at liberty! She on a sudden makes her escape, springs forward, reaches the bower sooner than her husband, to prevent his entering it. What are you in search of? says she to him. Without looking at her he answers: I am looking for a tomb. And your daughter, in the most tender tone, in a tone most proper to move the most obdurate soul, your charming daughter replies; Wherefore look for a tomb? my beloved? Your Sophia is not dead.—He then exclaims: it is the succouring voice! and lifting his eyes upon her: Sophia! Ye gods! My Sophia! He fell senseless into her arms, she supported him; we offered to carry him away, the doctor came running: No; love, fortunately rash, has commenced the cure; let love accomplish it, and let it be assisted by nature; let us strike all our



blows at once at the young man, already so powerfully agitated. You, his father, stop there; let his sister draw near; let him, when he awakes, find himself surrounded by all the objects dearest to his heart.

Faublas opened his eyes. My Sophia! cried he—my father!—my Adelaide!—Ah! Whence are you all come?—where are we? I have had a dreadful dream, which methought lasted for several centuries! A dream! Ah! my Eleanor! Ah! Madame de B—.

His wife pressed him to her bosom, covered him with kisses, and repeated: My beloved, your Sophia is not dead.—Sophia! said he, Sophia will return me more than I have lost. Sophia! Ah! how guilty I am!—you too, all of you forgive my ingratitude and the sorrows I have heaped upon you.

He dropped on his knees before us, attempted to speak, but could not. His tears finally opened a passage, and his sobs stifled his voice. The doctor sent forth a scream of joy: That is it, he is saved! I can now be answerable for his recovery.

When he rose, he felt very weak, nevertheless, supported on the arm of his wife, and of .

his sister, he proceeded towards the house. He crossed over the bridge without looking at the river; soon after, however, he turned round, to cast a look at the bower from which he was removed. Pity, said he, pity a still remaining weakness; do not destroy that tomb.

We have just put him to bed; he there immediately fell asleep most soundly. Your adorable daughter has saved us all.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

*18th May, 1785, eleven at night.*

He has slept thirty-eight hours without interruption; and since he is awake, neither speaks a word, nor does anything but which announces good sense and tender feelings. True, indeed, we see him occasionally indulge sad recollections; but a word from his father, a caress from his sister, and a look from his wife, expel his regret. Meanwhile the doctor agrees to pains being taken to make the convalescent forgetful of his sorrows; but forbids his being importuned; nay, he prescribes his being sometimes up to his melancholy reveries, and above all things, that he should never be disturbed in his nocturnal walks. Sophia alone is permitted to enter the bower.

This evening, at the critical moment, he went down into the garden, and without looking at the river, walked slowly wherever chance seemed to guide him. He nevertheless finally took to the bower, where Sophia was waiting for him.—Come, my beloved, let us go and weep together.—This monument it is true, replied he, is a gratification to me in my sorrow; but an inscription is wanted to it.—Let us compose one, my dear, I have my pencil about me: dictate, I am going to write it; we shall have it engraven afterwards.

Here lies the Countess de Lignolle.  
Here lies also the Marchioness de B—.

Both of them at the same time adored the same young man; both, on the same day and nearly at the same hour, met with an equally tragical end. Victims of a similar destiny, they will be enclosed in the same tomb, but will not leave behind the same regret.

The Marchioness died at the age of twenty-six, in the greatest lustre of beauty. My Eleanor, all charming, had scarcely commenced when she ended. She was aged sixteen years, five months, and nine days. My child died

with her. Why so? What offence had that innocent creature offered to the gods?

Pity the Marchioness de B—.

Bestow tears upon Madame de Lignolle.

Bestow tears especially upon their lover who has survived them.

My beloved, your Sophia is not dead. Distracted I must be! cried he: erase, erase that last line.

The dear children returned home together. Faublas is now as fast asleep as if he had been watching the whole of last night. Adieu, my friend, return then, return to partake of our joy.

P.S.—The Baroness de Fonrose, it is said, is so disfigured as not to be known again. It is also stated that unable to be consoled for her deformity, she is going to bury herself in an old castle in Vivarais. That woman has done me a deal of harm.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

*18th June, 1785, ten in the morning.*

He has recovered his embonpoint, his bloom of youth; but he is always thoughtful and melancholy; and goes every evening to weep over the monument in the bower.

Now that it appears certain that the fatal accident will be attended with no dangerous consequences, I must not conceal from you, that one day of last week we were dreadfully alarmed: the heat had been excessive, and at sunset there was a tremendous storm. As soon as he heard the winds roaring, Faublas appeared much agitated; he could not see the dark clouds without shuddering; at the first clap of thunder he rushed into the water; but immediately returned on shore, calling to us all, and weeping abundantly. The following night passed in tranquillity, and on the succeeding day, you would not have believed that on the preceding one my son could have had so violent an attack.

The doctor has not flattered me, but has declared, in my hearing, that the Chevalier de Faublas perhaps would never be able to hear a clap of thunder without suffering great agitation. He has particularly recommended my never allowing my son to re-enter Paris, because it were possible that at the sight of the Pont-Royal he might relapse into the cruel state from which we have been at such pains to rescue him.

Not allow him to re-enter Paris! Where then shall we go and live? In my province, or at Warsaw. The proposal you have made me, my friend, in your last letter, deserves serious reflections. To quit the country of my forefathers, to go and settle in yours with my children! I beg you will allow me time to think of it. Until I fix upon a determination, receive, my dear Lovinski, my congratulations upon your name, estates and commissions being restored to you. Boleslas and your sisters are overjoyed, and only speak of going to join you. I am sensible if I wish to continue in France with my Adelaide, I must renounce my son; for you never will be reconciled to the idea of living separated from the daughter of Lodoiska. I am well aware, that with mental accomplishments, a fortune and beauty, my Adelaide may find an advantageous match anywhere; but to leave behind me in France an ancient name! to remove far from the tombs of my ancestors! allow me time to think of it.

The day before yesterday, I unintentionally chagrined my poor son. You remember, perhaps, that box of diamonds which Jasmin delivered to us in Faublas's apartment, on the

day of the terrible catastrophe. The man, equally discreet and faithful, would never tell me whence came those diamonds: the day before yesterday I showed them to my son: I immediately saw him melting into tears. These jewels, exclaimed he, belonged to my Eleanor! —Oh! how I repented I had not guessed at that!—He kissed alternately every article in the little box; and then, with great exultation cried out: Jasmin, take this back immediately to M. de Lignolle: tell him that I have kept for myself the less costly, but the most precious article; tell him from me that the captain is a coward, if he does not come to demand of me the wedding-ring of his pretended sister-in-law. This was the proper time, perhaps, to show my son the insolent and barbarous challenge of the captain; but I was apprehensive of occasioning at once too much agitation to the young man, with whose formidable impetuosity I am well acquainted.

I have just heard of the Marchioness d'Armincœur being dangerously ill in Franche-Comté. I am afraid her chagrin will kill her. Poor woman! she adored her niece, who indeed

was deserving of her unlimited affection! I shall beware of announcing to Faublas the danger of the aunt; he reproaches himself enough already for the misfortunes of the niece.

The Doctor has discovered that the spirited and unhappy young man wanted occupation, and that his melancholy required an object capable first of settling and subsequently of diverting it; he has advised him to write the history of his life; your daughter agrees to it, I likewise grant my consent, provided the manuscript is never made public.

Yesterday, Dr. Willis returned to London; he would not accept of anything; I have forced him to trust me with his pocket-book, in which I have enclosed notes to the value of five years of my income. Upon similar occasions it is that one regrets not being ten times richer. Go, Willis! carry back with you the blessings of a whole family, and deserve at a future period the blessings of a whole nation.

Your daughter has just received also her due reward: her husband and lover has been restored to her at night. Our happy children are still in bed. Farewell, my dear friend.



## THE SAME TO THE SAME.

*26th June, 1785, four in the afternoon.*

I accept of your proposal, my friend; I am almost forced so to do. At a very early hour this morning, my son has received a lettre de cachet to the effect of his commencing within twenty-four hours his travels abroad. I am just returned from Versailles; I have seen my friends, I have seen the ministers; it appears that Chevalier de Faublas's exile is to be indefinite for a long time. What a pity! if parental affection does not blind me, that young man would have merited high promotion in his native country.

I have petitioned a fortnight to make all necessary preparations for our departure; the delay has been granted upon the express condition only that during that interval the Chevalier was not to leave the house at Dugny.

Another fortnight, my friend, and then we shall all set off together, we shall be with you as soon as possible, and continue with you for life. Adieu. I shall say nothing of your daughter's impatience; Dorliaka writes by every post.

CHEVALIER DE FAUBLAS TO THE VICOMTE DE  
LIGNOLLE.*6th July, 1785.*

The Baron has but just communicated to me, Captain, your note, which I had long wished to receive. Madame de Lignolle, whom your rage has ruined, has not yet been revenged; time appears to me very long.

If your challenge contained only gross insults and impertinent bravadoes, I would not wonder at it; but I cannot admire too much the refinement of your barbarity; you exact that on the same day, and at the same moment, the father and son should fight the two brothers! You exact it? Be satisfied then. The Baron and the Chevalier de Faublas will repair on the 14th of this month to Kell, where, until the 16th, they will expect the Comte and Vicomte de Lignolle. We shall meet again.

THE SAME TO THE MARQUIS DE B—.

*6th July, 1785.*

MONSIEUR LE MARQUIS.—The Baron has just delivered to me your note, which it grieves me to be obliged to answer. If you insist upon it, I shall be on the 17th of this month at Kell, where I shall stop to the 20th; but I wish most

ardently, that satisfied with finding here the assurance of my lively regret, you would not quit Paris.

I have the honour to be, etc.

CHEVALIER DE FAUBLAS TO COUNT LOVINSKI.

*Kell, 24th July, ten in the morning.*

MY DEAREST FATHER-IN-LAW.—Am I miserable enough? All whom I love, through ill-conceived generosity, wish to sacrifice their lives with an intent of saving mine; as if, whether of two lovers, or of two friends, the most unhappy was not the survivor.

The two brothers arrived this morning. The Count de Lignolle shows some anger at the sight of me; but I see him turn pale, his voice trembles, and I can easily discover, in his whole deportment, that compelled by his brother to an act of vigour, M. le Comte would prefer having no explanation with me. The Captain accosted me with a wild look, and said to me in a tone intended to be threatening and ironical: I shall have the honour of sending you to the shades; he will fight your father. At any rate, I announce to you both, that either party must triumph or die; woe, therefore, pursued

he, looking at M. de Belcour, to him who has no other second than an effeminate dolt, or a madman. I declare, Chevalier, that as soon as I have killed you, I will help my brother to finish that gentleman. (He pointed to my father.) I seized the hand of the barbarian, squeezed it most powerfully: Ferocious tiger! shall I not tear away your odious life?

My father and I left your sister, mine, and Sophia to the care of Boleslas, and departed with our two enemies. When beyond the ramparts, we immediately dismounted.

I drew my sword: O my Eleanor, your ashes demand vengeance, receive the blood which is going to run! The Captain vociferated: Why do not you demand they would enclose you in the same grave? He advanced towards me; we began a furious fight, which, for a long time, was maintained with perfect equality on both sides.

M. de Belcour has already, for several minutes back, obtained an early victory over the Count; but, too honourable to exercise against the Captain the horrid condition which the latter had himself imposed, my father remained a motionless spectator of my redoubled efforts.

At last I hit the Vicomte, but my sword broke upon one of his ribs. My antagonist, seeing me nearly disarmed, thought he would overpower me, but, most fortunately, he now only thrust with a weakened arm. Meanwhile, frightened at the inequality of the contest, my father, my too generous father, rushed between us: Hold, said he giving me his sword, you will make a better use of it than I can. Alas! while speaking to me, he presented his bare flank to the Vicomte. The barbarian pushed at him. He was going to repeat his thrust, when, threatening him with the steel already crimsoned with the blood of his brother, I forced him to think only of his own defence.—The savage! I have punished him. He rolled in the dust, while the Baron, with his eyes raised to heaven, still supported himself on his right hand and knees. The barbarian! he is dead; but, prior to his breathing his last, he saw the son, free from the least harm, bestow upon his father the most speedy assistance.

Meanwhile M. de Belcour is in danger; am I miserable enough? Love, fatal Love! How many calamities.—The post hour is come—ah! pity me, pity your children; they all love you;

they are all plunged in deep sorrow. I remain with due respect, etc.

FAUBLAS.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

*17th July, 1785, ten in the morning.*

MY DEAREST FATHER-IN-LAW.—Sophia writes very regularly to you every morning; you are informed that the Baron's wound is not so dangerous as had been thought at first; you know that in a fortnight or three weeks, we shall be capable to resume our journey, too happy to have got clear off with the only displeasure of joining you some weeks later. Let me tell you, however, of the favourable event which has occurred this day.

Sophia, Adelaide, and myself had been sitting up all night with the Baron: my wife and my sister, equally tired, were just going to bed. To follow Sophia, I only waited till one of my aunts would come and take my place by the bedside of the dear patient, whom we should feel apprehensive to commit to the care of strangers; it was then seven at most.

My servant came on a sudden and brought me word that somebody wanted to speak to me in private. The Baron, uneasy in his mind,

but not without a cause, said to me; bid him to speak the truth.—It is the Marquis!—Jasmin, I forbid you to tell a lie: is it the Marquis?—It is not the Marquis that wants to speak to you below; but he has sent to let you know that he was waiting for you behind the rampart.—Faublas, exclaimed M. de Belcour, you have wronged M. de B. most shockingly, but I shall only say one word to you; if you are not back in a quarter of an hour, I shall expire before the day is over. You will see me back in a quarter of an hour, father. I then embraced and left him.

I soon joined my enemy; M. le Marquis I had presumed to hope you would not come. He cast a sullen look at me, and without favouring me with an answer, immediately drew. I screamed out; this sword! it is the one!—Yes, said he! and tremble! I immediately drew mine, rushed upon him, and only aimed at disarming him. Within a few minutes, I had the good fortune to see the fatal sword fly at ten yards distance. I seized it, returned to the Marquis, and kneeling before him, said! permit me to keep this sword, take away mine, carry with you the assurance which I renew.—He

interrupted me: ah! must I moreover be indebted to him for my life?

This said, he mounted his horse and disappeared.

. I am with respect, etc.

VICOMTE DE VALBRUN TO CHEVALIER DE FAUBLAS.

*Paris, 15th October, 1786.*

For too long a period you have left us, my dear Chevalier; must the displeasure of your indifference still add to our regret? Have you then, when you left France, dropped all your friends in oblivion? Wherefore do you refuse corresponding with a man who has never given you the least offence? You must make me amends; and unless you wish me to charge you with ingratitude, let me hear from you, and of your family by the first post, and with particular detail of circumstances.

Public rumour informs me that you are now engaged in writing the Memoirs of your youthful days. I have fancied that you would be glad to be told of the present situation of some personages whom you are frequently to mention in the history of your amours.



The Marchioness d'Armincour, devoured with chagrin, lives more retired than ever on the estate she possesses in Franche Comté. The Baroness de Fonrose, become frightfully ugly, never leaves her old castle in Vivarais. Count Rosambert has also been compelled to retire from the world: his Countess was also brought to bed at the end of the eighth month of her marriage. M. de Rosambert, who, notwithstanding his misfortune, still retains his cheerfulness, jocularly maintains to all who will hear him, that his wife's little boy resembles much Mademoiselle de Brumont; he further says that he would give anything in the world that M. de B—, who is such a connoisseur in physiognomies, would examine the face of that infant, and that M. de Lignolle, from whom no affection of the soul is kept secret, would feel Madame de Rosambert's pulse whenever the Chevalier de Faublas is spoken of in her presence. That La Fleur, who served the unfortunate woman whose name I purposely suppress, was become valet-de-chambre to the widowed husband; but he took it into his head to rob his master, who from his dislike to thieves, has informed against this one. The

wretch has been hanged at the gate of the hotel de Lignolle. It is not four months since Justine has left the house of correction, the diet whereof has not embellished her; the poor child, unable to do better, is become cook and factotum to Madame le Blanc, the wife of a physician in Faubourg Saint Marceau. It is said in that part of the town that the mistress and the maid often go, in partnership, to magnetise abroad. Count de Lignolle, whom your father had not wounded dangerously, lives, possessed of more genius than he enjoys good health. Some people, nevertheless, have had it reported that last spring, having swallowed the remnant of the prescription of Dr. Rosambert, the Count, for a whole day, had felt as if inclined to marry again, but that, within so short a period, he had never been able to find a female miserable enough to take him for a husband. You must, however, be told that his charades are well received all over Europe. The Marquis de B— is in good health; he continues, according to his own saying, to be a good fellow; he nevertheless flies in a rage when he meets with a face that in his opinion resembles yours; at any rate he is

pleased with his own, and will even at times regret that of his wife.

Adieu, my dear Chevalier; I am waiting for your answer with impatience, etc.

CHEVALIER DE FAUBLAS TO VICOMTE DE VALBRUN.

*Warsaw, 28th October, 1786.*

I am very thankful, my dear Vicomte, for your kind remembrance of me; you have forwarded to me such documents as I wished for, and since you manifest the obliging desire of knowing exactly what has become of us, I hasten to inform you of the same. For these last fifteen months our family have inhabited at Warsaw, the palace of the Count Lovinski; fifteen months have elapsed like a day. My father-in-law is in high favour with the King. My father, the best of parents, overwhelmed with joy, feels happier for the felicity of his children, than for his own. Our dear Adelaide has just selected for her husband the Palatine of —, a young nobleman, the highest praise of whom I shall express in a very few words: he is deserving of her. I am now a father: it is not quite four months since Sophia has borne me the prettiest boy in the world. My Sophia,

the chief ornament of the Court of Warsaw, becomes daily more adorable. I enjoy with my wife more felicity than I ever had during the course of my extravagance.

Pity me, however; I have forfeited my native country; neither can I hold a commission in the army of the republic, for the whole of my life-time, perhaps; I must renounce the only profession for which I was intended by nature. All the efforts of art, all the efforts of my reason cannot remove from my view a persecuting and beloved phantom, whose frequent apparition tortures and charms me. O, Madame de B—! are you descended into your grave instead of your lover, merely that you might be able to follow him everywhere, without obstacles or relaxation?

Alas! that her shade alone pursued me! but the avenging gods have condemned Faublas to still dearer and more frequent recollections!

If, in a summer's evening, the south wind rises, if the lightning opens the clouds, if thunder roars, then I hear a fatal sound; I hear a soldier, barbarously cool, saying to me: "she is there." On a sudden, seized with unconquerable fears, deceived by a ridiculous hope, I run

to the roaring main; I behold, struggling in the midst of the waves, a woman. Alas! a woman that I am no more allowed to forget than to reach! Oh! pity me.

But no, Sophia is left to me. Far from pitying me, envy my lot, and only say, that for ardent men of feeling, who, at the time of their adolescence, have yielded to stormy passions, there is no perfect happiness to be expected upon earth.

THE END.









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